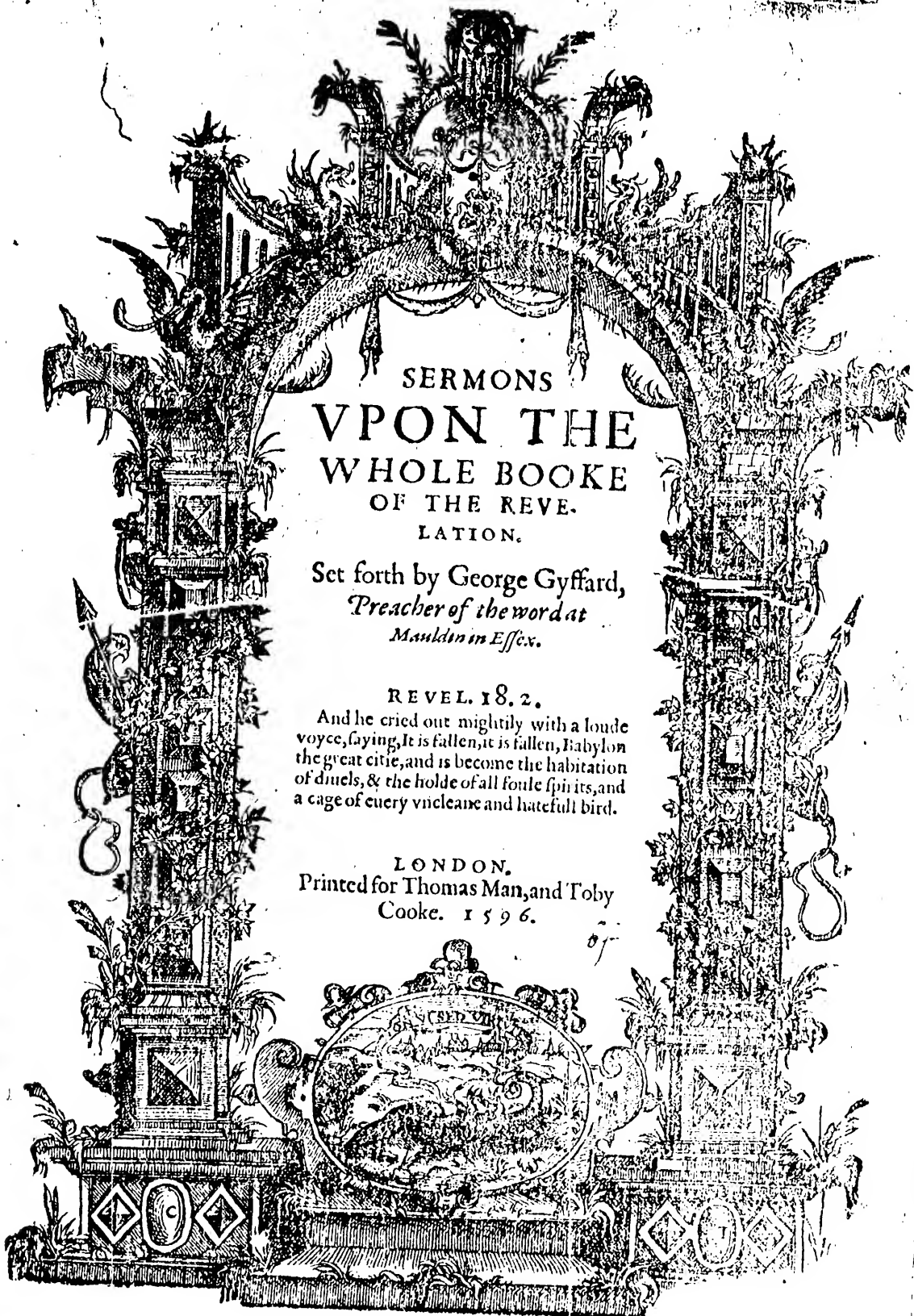


INCHES
1
2
3
4



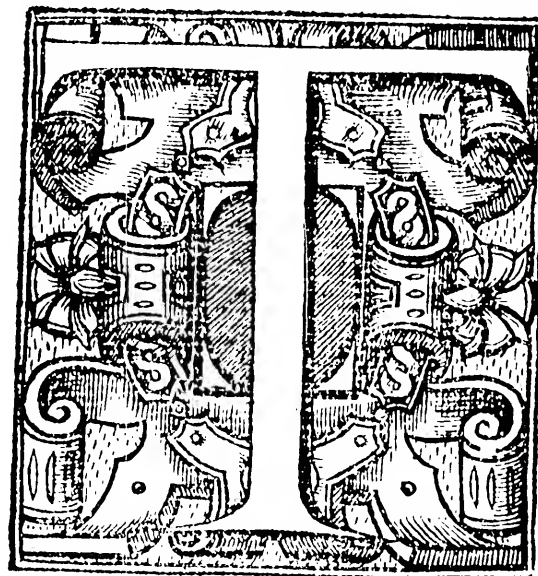
SERMONS
VPON THE
WHOLE BOOKE
OF THE REVE-
LATION.

Set forth by George Gyffard,
*Preacher of the word at
Maulden in Essex.*

REVEL. 18. 2.
And he cried out mightily with a loude
voyce, saying, It is fallen, it is fallen, Babylon
the great citie, and is become the habitation
of devils, & the holde of all foule spirits, and
a cage of euery vncleane and hatefull bird.

LONDON.
Printed for Thomas Man, and Toby
Cooke. 1596.

To the right Noble Earle of Essex, his
every good Lord.



Hat famous captaine Jehosua (vnder whose conduct the Kings of Canaan, & their armies were destroyed, and the tribes of Israel seated and planted in that land of promise) was straightly commanded by the Lord, *lehos. i.* that the booke of the lawe should not depart out of his mouth, but that hee should meditate therein day and night. A commandement not peculiar to him alone, but necessarie for al mighty warriors. For doubtles if there were any man that doth stand in need to be wholly directed by the counsaile & ayde of the Lord God in all his affayres, it is the noble warrior. And that for fundry causes: first, for that the true fortitude it selfe, wherewith hee is to performe his valiant and noble acts, is not a vertue (as I may say) humane, or which any man hath in his owne nature, or can attaine vnto by the powers of his own minde: but a diuine gift, a worke of grace, which is to be learned, & attained, only by the holy scriptures: for the Lord doth not decke the minde of man with true vertue, but by his sacred word. Then further it is requisite for him that warreth, to see and to knowe assuredly, that the cause and quarrell in which he fighteth, is good, iust, & warran-

table by that written word of God: otherwise, how sauage, how foule, and how cruel a thing, is the sheading of blood? Finally, he is wholly to depend vpon the mouth of God to be guided by his wisdom, counsel & direction in al his afayres, that so his battailes may be the battailes of the Lord, that if he stand and conquer, he conquereth to the Lord, if he be wounded and fal, he falleth & dieth in the Lord. This is a most cleere case, & without all doubt or controuersie. Of such worthies so guided by God, the church for her defence had plentie in old time, according as her need required, being (as the holy histories doe shew) beset on euery side, with so many and so fierce enemies, that the prophet in the Psalme reporteth, saying, except the Lord had been on our side, now may *I/rael* say, except the Lord had beene on our side, whē men rose vp against vs, they had swallowed vs vp quicke, when their wrath was kindled against vs. Of such also she standeth in great need in these dayes, being in the midst of those fierce & terrible warres, which this reuelation so long since hath prophesied of, and foreshewed. The time is now past, in which the fift angel, as we reade chap. 16. hath poured forth his vial vpon the throne of the beast, and that bloody kingdome of Antichrist waxeth darke, their brightnes and glory is deminished, wherefore they be so vexed, that they gnaw their tongues for sorrow. The sixt Angell also (as it is sayd in the same chapter) hath powred forth his viall vpon the great riuer *Euphrates*, and the water thereof is dried vp, that is to saye, the riches, the strength, the fortification & munition of great *Babel* doth so decay, that the way for the kings of the earth is in preparing. The dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, haue sent forth

forth their messengers, euen their vncleane spirites which are like frogges, into all lands vnto the kings of the earth to stirre them vp vnto battaile. The Iesuites, the Seminarie Priests, are dispersed in al countries. The armies of *Gog* and *Magog*, which compasse about the tents of the saints, & the beloued citie, *Reuel. 20.* are yet but in part destroyed. The beast and the Kings of the earth, and their armies are yet assembled to war against the Lord, *Reuel. 19.* All these things come to passe, in the dayes that wee liue in. Now of late yeeres there entred (as they call it) into the holy League, Kings & Princes, binding themselues with solemne vow to do their vtermost to destroy and to roote out al that professe the holy gospel of Iesus Christ: here is great conspiracy against the church. And by the singular blessing of God, our noble Queene hath been, and is the greatest defender and protector of the holy worship, & true worshippers that is vnder heauen. The Churches in other countries haue by her ayde been much supported & releued in their distresses. The Romish beast & his company haue espied so much and doe make full account, that al their wars & enterprises against the church are to final purpose, vnlesse they could first supplant and destroy her Maiestie. And to effect this their wicked desire, they haue inuented all the waies and meanes which possibly they can. Their Pope (who is the standerd-bearer in that apostasie) did long since excommunicate her Highnes. He hath frō time to time sent forth his Iesuite Priests & others, to worke all manner of trecheries, and traiterously to murder her royal Person: wherein the Lord God hath oftē preuented them miraculously, for which we are bound most deeply to giue him thanks. T

King of Spaine, who hath giuen his power to the beast, sent his forces *anno 88.* for to inuade her land, & to throw down her excellent Highnes, from that sacred authority & power in which almighty God hath placed her, & miraculouſly protected her, fighting frō heauen against her enemies, euen to the wonderment of the whole world. And what shall we thinke, that they haue now done? Nay, looke how long that great fierie dragon, Sathan, that prince of darknes doth burne in hatred against God & his truth, so long Antichrist and his adherents moued by his instigation, will be restles in seeking the subuersion of our religion, Queen, and countrie. Then doe we especially and aboue many others, stand in neede of noble warriors & mighty men, who in so great & waighty causes are to be guided by the most high God, euen by the light of his most sacred wordie, that through his blessing they may prosper and haue good successe. Among other bookes of the holy Scripture, this Reuelation doth giue both special instruction and direction, and also encouragement vnto these warres. For it doth not only prophecy of them and describe them, and shew what shall be the issue of thē, but also setteth forth how the Lord himselſe doth as it were sound the trumpet vnto this battaile against *Babel*, saying, Reward her euen as she hath rewarded you, and giue her double according to her works, and in the cup that she hath filled vnto you, fil her the double. In as much as she glorified her selfe and liued in pleasure, so much giue ye to her torment and sorrow, chap. 18.

This prophetic thē is most fit for the warriors of our time, at desire to war in the Lord, and for his truth. I haue according to my small ability expounded it in publike auditory,

tory, as a matter very profitable for the dayes that wee liue in: and I do present & offer it to your H. not that my simple exposition is worthy to come into the hands of so Honorable & so learned a person, where it can adde very small or rather no instruction: but I commend the prophetic it selfe, as a book most fit for your H. to be exercised in. And if it be requisite for all true christians to be instructed in it, then much more is it necessary for your H. aboue others, to bee euen thoroughly acquainted with it, for which I can easily render great and apparant reason. The enemies prepare themselues with mighty forces, threatening great terror vnto this land, euen as the waues of the sea, ready to ouerwhelme vs. If such wars and troubles do come, there is on the other part, and that generally through this Realme, among all that loue the safety and good of their countrey, a rare expectatiō of great things to be performed by your Honor. This expectation is as a great aduersary opposed, which your H. shall neuer be able to satisfie without the singular power, direction, & blessing of God. And if your H. with an vpright heart, shall firmly cleaue vnto the Lord God of Heauen, that power of his, that direction and blessing shall not be wanting. It may be some will obiekt, that many haue done exceeding great things, & to their great honor and commendation which haue had no true knowledge nor feare of God, but led with vaine glory, and with the fierceness of nature. I answer that it hath been so, but yet to their small good: for some of them hauing gotten great praise and honor, haue in their life time seene the buriall of the same. Other some haue left behinde thē a fame among men: but to what purpose? Can the breath of men

which vttereth their praise here vpon earth, any thing cool or mitigate the heate of those torments which they sustaine in hell? Looke vpon the valiant men of Israel, & behold what course they tooke, how they prospered, & how their honor doth stand both with God and men. King *Dauid* in the name of the Lord slew that great Gyant *Goliath*. And he saith, Blessed be the Lord my rocke, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to the battaile. King *Asa* hauing throwne downe idolatry in his kingdome, & caused the people to worship the true God, there came an army out of *Ethiopia* to inuade his land, an armie of a thousand thousands, he made his prayer to the Lord, resting vpon his power, and ouerthrew them, *2. Chron. 14*. The *Mobabites* & *Ammonites* gathered an exceeding multitude, and came against that godly King *Iehosaphat*: he assembled his people to fast & pray, and in the assembly vttered a prayer himselfe vnto the Lord God of heauen, and so obtained a glorious victory, *2. Chron. 20*. What should I speak of King *Ezechias*, who after he had restored the true worship of the Lord, had the enemies entring so neere, that they compassed Ierusalem with a mighty armie, where *Rabsaka* blasphemed the God of heauen: but the King and the Prophet *Esay* lift vp their praier vnto God, & the Angel of the Lord went forth that night, and slew in the armie of the *Assyrians*, an hundreth fourescore and fise thousand, *2. King, 19*. and *2. Chron. 32*. He is the same God still vnto all that with vprightnes of hart cleaue vnto him, & rest vpon his mighty power: and whosoeuer they be that cast away his feare & dishonor him, vndoubtedly they shall not alwaies prosper. In the booke of the Iudges there be also sundry valiant

ant men of war spoken of, and likewise in other bookes of the holy scripture: and their worthy acts be set forth. I omit them, let your H. looke vpon the description of the war & the warriors against Antichrist in these times, which is in the 19. chap. of this booke. For there is described both our great captaine the Lord Iesus, comming forth to battaile against the enemies of his Church, and also the noble warriors and worthie souldiers which fight vnder his banner. I saw heauen open (saith *S. John*) & behold there was a white horse, and he that sate vpon him was called faithfull and true, and he iudgeth and fighteth righteously. His eyes were as a flame of fire: & vpon his head are many crownes: & he had a name written which no man knoweth but himselfe. And he was clothed in a garment dipped in blood, and his name is called the word of God. The armies also in heauen followed him vpon white horses, clothed in fine white linnen & pure. Out of his mouth went a sharp sword, that with it hee might strike the heathen, for hee shall rule them with a rod of yron: and it is hee that shall tread the wine presse of the fiercenes and wrath of God almightie. And he had in his garment & in his thigh a name written, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. And a little after it followeth, And I saw the beast, and the Kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to war with him which sate vpon the horse, and with his armie. This battaile is fought vpon the earth, otherwise, how doe the beast, and the Kings of the earth and their armies fight? Moreouer, the armies of Christ are men vpon the earth, euen the godly Kings, Princes, Nobles, & worthy captaines, which with the materiall sword defend the Gospell, and the ministers and

and preachers of the truth, which with the spirituall sword fight against Antichrist. Against these the armies of the beast and of the Kings doe fight. These are said to bee the armies in heauen, because their cause for which they fight, is from heauen, and also the power with which they fight. These ride vpon white horses, and are clothed in fine white linnen and pure. They come strongly, swiftly, and cheerefully to this battaile. They come in sincerity, integritie and puritie of fairh, of loue, and of other affections. For all is pure white about them. The warriors of this world, which warre according to the lustes of their flesh in ambition, in pride and crueltie: may be said to ride vpon red horses, and to be clothed in bloodie garments. Put on that fine white linnen and pure, ride vpon that white horse among this blessed company, and follow this high captaine: and then shall your H. performe right worthy things to the glory of God, to the good of his people, and to your owne eternall praise and felicitie.

Your Honours most dutifull to commaund:

George Gyffard.



I shall not be amisse (good reader) to set downe briefly the matters which are handled in this prophecie: seeing the booke seemeth darke vnto many, yea so darke, that it cannot bee made cleere to their understanding. True it is, that if a man light vpon some peece of it, and take it by it selfe, hee shall finde it darke: but if hee looke vpon the whole course of the matters throughout the booke, and see how things be iterated, hee shall finde no such darknes as he feareth, & for that respect I suppose that a brieue opening is necessary. I wil not stand vpon an exquisite diuision of this prophecie into the maine parts, and so into subdivisions: but in a more plaine or rude course I will proceede, euen as the matters doe lye in order. First, therefore we are to know, that this booke is a prophecie which openeth the state of things to come in the world from the time that it was giuen to Iohn, euen to the great day of the generall iudgement. The three first chapters are to be ioyned together, because in them there is no opening or foreshewing of things to come, but of matters that were then present. For in the first chapter after the generall title of the booke in three verses, and the salutation of Iohn to the seven churches in five verses, ye haue the first vision, in which the Lord appeareth vnto Iohn, calleth him and authoriseth him, to receiue this prophecie, to write it, and to send it to the Churches, where the mystrie of the seven starres, and of the seven candlesticks is opened. In the second chapter, and in the third, there is opened by seven senerall epistles sent from the Lord, the state of euery one of the seven churches of Asia, vnto which this prophecie was to be sent: so that by the we may see in what estate the vniuersall church militant was at that time: for as some of these seven as yet stood firme, and other some had much declined, so was it with other churches. There be many right excellent instructions in these three chapters, both for the pastors & for their flocks, and nothing darke or difficult, because the Lord himselfe expounded that mystrie of the seven starres, & of the seven golde candlesticks. Then next there be eyght chapters to be ioyned together, beginning at the fourth, and so continuing to the end of the eleuenth. In these eyght chapters there are set out very briefly and darkly, the summe of all the whole prophecie: for it reacheth to the generall iudgement which these chapters containe, as it is most eident by the oath of the Angel chap. 10. who sweareth that there shall be no more time but in the dayes of the voyce of the senerth Angell when hee shall begin to blow the trumpet: which trumpet is blowne, in the ende of the eleuenth chapte: where there is also a description of the last iudgement. And now for the particulars in these eyght chapters. In the fourth chapter there is a glorious vision, which setteth forth the maiestie, the glorie and praise of the most high God, that raigneth and ruleth ouer all with his infinite power, wisdom, providence, and iustice, from whom this reuelation commeth. For it is called the reuelation of Iesus Christ, which God gaue him chap. 1. And we reade in the beginning of the next chapter, that the booke sealed with seven seales (which is this reuelation) was in the right hand of him that sat vpon the throne. Then further in this fift chapter, there is none found worthy to open the seales of this booke but the Lambe, euen the Lord Iesus alone, whose praise both men and Angels, and all creatures doe sound forth. Then the summe of these two chapters is, from
how

how high, how mighty, how wise, how iust & how glorious a God this prophetic commeth, and also from how worthy a mediator: who receiveth it, and openeth the seven seales thereof. In the sixth chapter we come to the revealing of the mysteries, when the Lambe openeth sine of the seven seales. Under the first of them is figured the conquest which Christ maketh over the nations of the world by this Gospel. Under the second, the third, and the fourth, are resembled the plagues and iudgements which the Lord sendeth upon the wicked worlde for despying and abusing the same his holy and precious Gospel. For when the graces and rich treasures of God are published and offerd unto men, and they set light by them, blaspheme and impugne them, hee sendeth bloodie warres, famines, pestilences & such like in al ages. Under the opening of the fift seale there is shewed the happie rest of the soules of those which were murdered by the tyrants and cruell rage of the people for the testimonie of Iesus: And how their bloud crieth aloud in the eares of the Lord for vengeance upon those wicked men which so cruelly slew them. Whereupon under the opening of the sixt seale, there followe wonderfull terrible signes of Gods wrath, and commotions, euen to the horror of the most wicked. Also vnder the same sixt seale is set forth a spirituall plague of God upon the world, euen the staying of the course of the holy Gospel, which is figured by foure wicked Angels or Diuels, holding the foure winde that they should not blow. This in the seuenth chapter, where also it is shewed how the Lord yet prouideth for his elect both of Iewes & Gentiles, which triumph and glorifie God for their saluation together withall the heauenly companie of blessed Angels. In the opening of the seuenth seale are figured out the greatest plagues of al for the Lord commeth to battaile in hostile manner against the wicked world, wherefore seuen Angels do sound seuen trumpets, and ye know that trumpets are sounded unto war. In the midst of these horrible plagues the Lord God still preserveth his church, and to declare so much, before the sounding of the trumpets, the Lord Iesus appeareth in vision standing at the altar with a golde censer & sweet odours. In the sounding of the first, the second, the third & the fourth trumpet, the haile & fire mingled with blood, are cast into the earth, the great mountaine burning with fire is cast into the sea, a great star falleth into the fountaines of waters & maketh them bitter, & the third part of the sun, of the moone & of the stars is stricken & darkened. By al which is meant such an vniuersal plague in all parts of the world in corrupting and depraving the pure religion, as should lay wast, destroy, poyson and darken, euen to the finall destruction of many. We may not thinke it strange that one plague is set forth vnder diuers figures, which is because the vniuersality of it is described by reaching to the heauens, to the earth, to the sea & to the riuers of waters. To the earth a wasting, & corrupting tēpest, to the sea a burning mountaine, to the fresh waters a bitter star, and to the sunne, moone and stars, that which doth darken. After these foure trumpets sounded, S. Iohn seeth an Angell flying in the midst of heauen, whom also he heard pronouncing, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth, and declaring that these three woes should be at the sounding of the three trumpets that remayned. For the plagues which come at the sounding of these three trumpets are exceeding great, yea the greatest of all other. The first of them, which is at the sounding of the fift trumpet, set forth in the ninth chapter, from the beginning of it unto the 13. verse, is the plague of the great Antichrist. This horrible plague is described vnder a great star that droppeth downe from heauen, to whom is giuen the keye of the

bottomles

TO THE READER.

bottomles pitte, euen the keye of hell. Starres in this booke (as the Lord sheweth in the first chapter) doe signifie the Ministers of the Gospell. So that this plague which is the kingdome of the great Antichrist, commeth by a Minister which falleth from heauenly doctrine, to that which is of the earth, yea of the diuell: for he openeth the pit of hel, and bringeth in the smoake of ignorance and darknes and errors, which darkeneth the ayre and the sunne. Out of which smoake breede the swarmes of Locusts, which like Scorpions doe sting men. Then at the sounding of the sixt trumpet, which beginneth at the 13. ver. of the 9. chapter, there are foure diuels let loose at Euphrates, & then followeth the description of the sauage kingdome of the Turkes: whose armies doe waste and destroy men in the popish Antichristian kingdome, euen those which worship images of gold, of silver, of brasse, of wood, & of stone, which yet repent not at that plague. The tenth chapter containeth matter of great comfort: for after that darke kingdome of Antichrist, & that cruell kingdome of the Turkes, the Lord commeth downe with brightnes from heauen, with the booke of Gods word open, to expell that smoake of Antichrist. He standeth upon the earth and the sea, he denounceth by seuen thunder horrible iudgements against his enemies he sweareth that the last day shall bee at the sounding of the next trumpet, and Iohn in the person of the ministers which should liue when this should come, is willed to take the litle booke and to eate it, and to prophesie to the kingdomes and nations. This thing is come to passe in our dayes, for after the great darkening, the Lord is come downe with light, the holy bible is againe opened, and the seruants of God haue with great studie, euen as it were eaten it up, and haue preached it unto great kingdomes and nations. This matter is continued in the eleuenth chapter, where Iohn is willed to measure the temple, &c. For the Church is measured and built up by the preaching of the word. And by this occasion here is annexed the historie of the builders, that is to say, of the faithfull Ministers of the Gospell, whom the Lord calleth his two witnesses. It is in the Law, that to testifie any matter, there must bee at the least two witnesses: and therefore that number is here chosen, to shew that the Lord will neuer be without a sufficient number of witnesses to his truth, when the Church was persecuted by the heathen Emperors of Rome, and afterward by the second beast, which is the great Antichrist. Their dignitie and spirituall power is set forth to be very great, but the beast shall kill their bodies, & the seruants of Antichrist shall vse very sauage crueltie towards them, but God giueth them glory. For when others doe succede them endewed with the same spirit, and doe set forth the same truth, and maintaine the same cause that they did, they may well bee said to be raised up againe to life, to the great wonderment of the wicked enemies, who are amazed to see them lifted up to heauen with honor, whom they had condemned unto hell as heretikes: and this commeth with great commotion and diuision of the people. And then commeth the third woe of the three which the Angell proclaymed, which is the last and the greatest, euen the euerlasting woe, which beginneth with great terror, at the sounding of the seuenth trumpet, which is the last. And thus haue wee the whole matter of this reuelation layde open in the opening of the seven seales. All matters, as ye may see, are opened, but briefly and darkely. And it was behouefull to the seruants of God, to haue them more fully and more cleerely opened, and for that cause, the Lorde of his great goodnes, doth set forth the chiefe and principall matters more at large, and far more cleerely. For now from the beginning of the twelfth chapter, unto the end of this

book.

booke, yee shall finde large and plaine descriptions, which open the former things more cleerely. Let us then come vnto them.

In the beginning of the twelfth chapter, the Church militant is shewed in vision, vnder the forme of a woman decked with heauenly ornaments, and traueiling with faith and hope, to bring forth her sauour, the promised Messias. Then appeareth also in vision, her chiefe enemie, a most ugly monster the diuell, waiting to destroy the blessed seede so soone as he should be borne. He sayleth of his purpose, and is overcome in battaile by Christ, and cast downe from heauen, so that he can no longer assaile the Church to pluck her downe from her heauenly inheritance, at which there is the voyce of triumph, of ioye and gladnes. Then Satan being conquered by Christ, he seeketh utterly to destroye the woman at once out of the earth, the Church being then in a narrow compasse, and sayling therein, he maketh warre with the remnant of her seede. In the thirteenth chapter there are shewed in vision the chiefe instruments that the dragon useth in warring against the faithfull, in persecuting, and afflicting of them: of which the first is the beast with seven heads and ten hornes. A beast most monstrous, savage and cruell, and of so great power that the world wondereth after him, and worshippeth him. The sixt head of this beast, euen the heathen persecuting Emperors of Rome, vttered great blasphemies against God and his Church, and made warre against the saints, and overcame them, and slew thousand thousands of them, in those ten first persecutions which histories of old doe report. And what power vnder heauen can be shewed, that so murdered the saintes, since Christ, but the Empire of Rome? The other is the beast with two hornes like the Lambe, which speaketh like the dragon. This is the great Antichrist (as the Papists themselves are forced to confesse) and therefore it is set forth, how he seduceth the inhabitants of the earth with signes and wonders. He is both the seventh head of the former beast, and a beast by himselfe, exercising double power, and therefore the Angel, chapter 17. calleth him both the seventh head of the beast, and saith also that hee is the eyght. He erecteth the very patterne or image of the heathen Empire that former beast, and causeth the inhabitants of the earth to worship and to obey the same. He causeth all to receiue his marke, and none may buy and sel, except hee haue his marke, or his name, or the number of his name, where the number of his name is expressed. In the 14. chapter there is first a vision of the Lambe vpon mount Sion, with his holy and pure company of true and sincere worshippers, which sing laude and praise to God. For the Lambe preserveth them as his holy Church militant vpon earth in the dayes of that kingdome of Antichrist.

Then followeth the fall of great Babel, which is that tyrannous kingdome of Antichrist. And her fall is by the preaching of the Gospell, which the Angell representing the Ministers, doth publish, calling vpon all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people to worship the true God, and so the worship erected by Antichrist, being the worship of creatures, downe it falleth, this is come to passe in our dayes: and there is vengeance denounced against all those which will not forsake that wicked idolatrous kingdome. Then followeth in the last part of the 14. chapter, a description of the last iudgement vnder two figures, the one of harvest, the other of the vintage. The latter in deede which is of the vintage, doth represent onely the cutting downe of the wicked, and casting them like clusters of grapes into hell, which is as the great wine presse of the wrath of God. In the

the 15. and 16. chap. there followeth an other vision of seven Angels with the seven last plagues. They be the plagues which are powred forth vpon the kingdome and subiectes of the great Antichrist, six of them in this world, least it might be thought, shall they escape here untill the last day? And the seventh which is at the day of iudgement, the last and the greatest, euen that eternall plague. And before these plagues are powred forth, the vision doth shew, how the faithfull doe escape being set in safety in the midst of them, passing through the sea of this world, which is called glassie and mingled with fire, euen as the children of Israel did escape from Pharaoh when he pursued them in the redde sea. Moses and the children of Israel did sing a song to the Lord, when they were passed through: And so they that passe through this gulf of the world and get the victory ouer Antichrist, are said to sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lambe. The Angels powre forth their vials, and there is a greivous sore, and bloodshed by warres, there is famine and pestilence through immoderate heate at foure of them. And then at the fift the kingdome of the beast waxeth darke by the preaching of the gospell, which is an exceeding sorrowe vnto the Idolaters, and at the sixt the great rining for those that shall destroy her. And hereupon the dragon, the beast and the false prophet do bestir them, & send forth their ambassadors into all lands to get forces vnto battaile against those which destroy their kingdome. Which warre is now at the hottest in our daies. And then followeth the powring out of the last viall, which containeth together with the last vengeance of eternall iudgement, great and horrible plagues going immediatly before the last day. Then there followeth the 17. chapter, where the Angell sheweth vnto Iohn great Babel borne vp with the beast with seven heads, and interpreteth vnto him the mystery of eney part. As what the beast is, what is signified by the seven heads, and also by the tenne hornes, and what they should do: and last of all who that woman is which sitteth vpon the beast, and saith it is the great city which ruleth ouer the kings of the earth. Rome is the great citie, Rome is great Babel, Rome of necessity is the seat of the great Antichrist: for what other city in the world is builde upon seven hils besides Rome, which the angel sayth is ment. by seven heads? What other city in the world beside Rome, had those seven several gouernments? of which sine were fallen when Iohn receiued this prophesie, one was, euen the Empire, & one to come, that is the papacy. What other citie hath shed the blood of the martyrs but Rome? let the papists shew if they can. There is Rome Babel, euen the woman drunken with the blood of the saints. In the 18. chapter the fall of Babel is set forth more at large. She falleth by the light of the gospel, for as chap. 10. the angel cometh downe with the little booke open, so here againe he cometh with great light, and downe falleth Babel, and becometh the habitation of diuels. Shee hath committed horrible things, & aboundeth in sinne, and the people of God are called vpon to depart from her, and not only that, but also to execute vengeance vpon her, and to recompence her, for all the mischief that shee hath wrought. And at her great fall and destruction, there are brought in her louers and frindes, wayling and lamenting very dolefully, euen all such as haue committed whoredome and liued in pleasure with her, and gayned by her: for their pleasure and their gaine is gone, for shee cometh to utter desolation. Then in chap. 19. there is first the voice of the heauenly companies praying the Lord for her fall

fall and destruction. Then is there also a very great ioy and reioy, and praise, for the celebration of the mariage of the Lambe, which is the mariage of Christ to his church, and the blessednes of those which come to that feast. And lastly there is in that chapt. a glorious description of the Lord Iesus comming forth vnto battaile with his armies, against the beast and his adherents, with the victory which he hath ouer them. And this is the full overthrow of Antichrist. But there hath as yet bene no mention of the destruction of the chiefe enemy of all, that is to say, of the dragon himselfe the diuell, in the 20. chapt. therefore his iudgement and destruction is set forth. And because he hath bene a more generall worker, and his mischiefe hath extended larger then the kingdome of Antichrist, there is in that 20. chapter an history of him set forth by it selfe: hee seduced the nations before the comming of Christ, who at his comming bindeth him by the light of his gospell from seducing the nations, and so holdeth him shut up for the space of a thousand yeers, in which the church doth flourish greatly, and many are raised in the spirituall life. But when the thousand yeares are expired, Satan is loosed and goeth forth againe to seduce, and by the great Antichrist, and by the Turke, gathereth innumerable multitudes into his armies to fight against the Church, which armies are called Gog and Magog, but they are all overcome and destroyed, and that olde serpent himselfe is caught, and together with his instruments the beast and the false Prophet, is cast into eternall fire to be tormented. After this we haue in that 20. chapter a goodly description of the generall iudgement, with the execution of vengeance vpon the wicked. And then in the two last chapters, that is, in the 21. and 22. there is described the eternall felicity and blessed estate of the Church, and that in such goodly manner, that he is euen a very blocke or a stone, that is not moued therewith. There be the greatest riches, and glorie, and ioyes shadowed out that euer were heard of. After this in the latter part of the 22. chapter from the tenth verse, followeth the generall conclusion of this booke, where the authoritie of it is ratified with sundrie ratifications. If men doe but obserue this general course of this prophetic, and studiously obserue the handling of matters, they shall

find no such darknes as is feared, much lesse shall it be found so obscure as the Papiſts doe beare in hand, when they would driue men from the reading and studie of it, because it painteth out great Babel, that Romish harlot.

Farewell in Christ.



The first Sermon.

CAP. I.

1. The reuelation of Iesus Christ, which God gaue vnto him to shew to his seruants things which must shortly be done: and he signified sending by his Angel vnto his seruant Iohn,
2. Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimonie of Iesus Christ, whatsoeuer things he hath scene.
3. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that heare the words of this prophetic, and keepe the things which are written therein, for the time is at hand.



It is not many yeares past (as yee know) since I did expound this booke euen in this place, and vnto this audientorie: And therefore least any should maruaile, why I vndertake to expound it againe, I let ye vnderstand that there is great reason to moue me hereunto, as namelie, that the booke is a most excellent and a most precious iewel, which God hath bestowed vpon his Church, and great pitie it is, that all Gods seruants are not throughlie acquainted with it, especially in these times. The holie Ghost sayth, *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that heare the words of this prophetic, and keepe the things which are written therein, &c.* which sufficiently proueth it to bee most precious, and most excellent, and the vse of it right necessarie for all good Christians, and especially (as I sayd before) in these times. If any will say, why especially in these dayes? let him marke a little. This booke (at least one great part of it) doth describe and paint out as it were in liuely colours, the tyrānous kingdome of Antichrist, euen great Babylon the mother of whoredomes and abominations of the earth. It hath pleased God, of his great goodnes, and abundant mercie towards his people a little before our dayes, and in our dayes, to powre forth a viall of his wrath vpon the very throne of that babylonick beast, and to make his kingdome waxe darke. The pure light of Gods word hath displayed & disclosed all their filthines. Their power, their estimation, their glorie, their riches & their dignitie are much come downe and decayed. They gnaw their tongues for sorrow, they bee vexed in mind. They be studious now in learning, and ransacke all corners, in what writers soeuer to finde any thing which may make some shewe of defence for themselves. They be both subtle, and full of cruell practises: and all, if it were possible, is to re-

couer their ancient glorie, and to repaire the breaches which are made in the walles of their great citie. Is it not then good that men should be armed against them with the things reuealed in this booke? Is not now in these dayes, the very heate of the battaile betweene them and vs? and this prophetic layeth them open, whereby yee may well perceiue that there is great reason to expound it againe and againe, that it may arme the seruants of God. But here will bee obiections and shewe of reasons brought forth, to proue that this reuelation is not to bee medled withall, nor in any wise to be expounded among the common people. The Papists indeed cannot abide, that the people should haue any part of the holy scriptures in a knowne language, nor that they should haue any skill or vnderstanding in them: because all sacred scriptures detect and bewray their treacheries: but of all others, they cannot abide that this prophetic should be made knowne, or expounded publikely. The ancient Fathers (say they) the greatest and learnedest Doctors of the Church since the Apostles times, confesse that this prophetic is so mysticall and so darke, that they could not vnderstand it. And our english Iesuites of Rhemes, alleadge for this purpose a saying of *Hierome*, that the reuelation hath as many mysteries as words, and that in euery word there are hidden manifold and sundry senses. Also they alleadge *Denis* Bishop of Corinth speaking to like purpose. The matter cometh to this in effect: If the great learned Fathers could not vnderstand it, how can any man of lesse learning take vpon him to expound it? is it not great arrogancie to say we doe vnderstand it better then they did? Or shall the vnlearned people be made to vnderstand that which those learned Fathers could not attaine vnto? Where there is such mysticall sense and ambiguitie, what certainty can there be in the exposition? And if the interpretation be not certaine, but that one will say this is the sense, an other will differ from him, and say that is the sense, and a third from them both, to what purpose should it be interpreted?

Let not this trouble any man, or cause him to thinke it in vaine to seeke for the interpretation of this prophetic, for all is but a blind cauill, and very easie to be refel- led, which also I will now partly answer, and partly when wee come to the hand- ling of the wordes in the text which I haue read. I doe, and I may boldly affirme, that a man of meane learning in comparison, may now in these dayes more easilie vnderstand, and expound this booke far more perfectly then the learnedst Doctors could, and Fathers in ancient times. And further I say, and can proue that it is no arrogancie to speake thus, because there is great reason for it, as one of the ancient- est Fathers, *Irenaus* I meane, in his fourth booke, chap. 43. doth shew. For he vpon a saying in *Daniel* 12. Of sealing vp the book vntill the time determined: and from a saying out of the Prophet *Jeremias*, that in the last dayes men should vnderstand those things: inferreth, that euery prophetic before it take effect, is darke riddles and ambiguitie vnto men. But when the time came (sayth he) and it cometh to passe which was propheticd, then the prophecies haue a cleere and an vndoubted expo- sition. If this saying of his be true, (as none that hath sense can deny it) then this re- uelation hath many things in it, which vnto the same *Irenaus*, vnto *Denis*, vnto *Hierome*, vnto *Augustine*, and vnto the rest of the Fathers were, as *Irenaus* sayth,

Enigmata,

Enigmata, darke riddles, and ambiguitie, and might bee taken diuers wayes, be- cause they liued before the times in which they should be fulfilled, which now vn- to vs that haue seene them come to passe, haue a cleere and an vndoubted expo- sition. I will open this more particularly thus: Some things in this booke were fulfil- led before the dayes of these Fathers, and some in the dayes in which they liued, these they did vnderstand. Some things were figured out which should come to passe after their dayes, as the comming of the great Antichrist, and all that he should doe. They vnderstoode that such a wicked dominion should be set vp, yea some of them saw plainly, and so they testifie in their writings, that this monster, the man of sinne should haue his throne in Rome: but that the Bishop of Rome should so farre degenerate, as to become the head and the standard-bearer in this Apostasie, to set vp idolatrie and all blasphemous abominations, and to persecute the holy Gospell of Iesus Christ, they did not see. Hereof it came, that many things darke vnto them, are now so cleere vnto vs being fulfilled, that all which are not wilfully blind by despising the light, can not but see them, yea euen vnlearned men and wo- men. And thus you may see that this obiection of the Iesuites is but a meere cauill. We haue a cleere and vndoubted exposition of the chiefest and almost of all things in this prophetic: because they be come to passe, and agree in all respects with the things which haue fallen out.

There is an other obiection, and that seemeth to carry greater waight: That is this, there bee many great learned men, Bishops, Doctors, and wise princes, which doe take the Pope to be the Pastor ouer Christs Church, and in no wise to be Anti- christ. If it be cleere by the reuelation, if it haue so certaine and so vndoubted an ex- position vpon the fulfilling of prophecies, that Rome is Babylon, the papacie the a- postasie, the Pope the man of sinne, their religion the worship of deuils: how com- meth it to passe, that all these learned and wise men should not see it, no not any one of them? Doe not they read the scriptures? doe not they vnderstand the scrip- tures, as well as others? Is it like that so many of them should bee blinde in that which a few others of lesse account should see? Nay, shall we say that all they can- not knowe that, which vnlearned men and women doe take vpon them to see and to knowe? Shall we thinke these of the common people can be right, and the o- ther wrong? Shall these talke of the reuelation, and say thus and thus it is to be vn- derstoode, the poperie is the kingdome of the beast, the Pope is Antichrist, and so teach them that be learned? What man of wisdom will thinke that plowmen and artificers know such mysteries, and great wise Doctors knowe them not?

Thus they rattle, and make a noyse to trouble weake men: and indeed vnto mans wisdom, it seemeth an hundred to one, that all those great Cardinals, Bishops, Doctors, and wise Princes should rather see the truth, then a few despised persons: but looke into the holy word of God, goe into his sanctuarie, as the Prophet spea- keth *Psalm* 73. and you shall find it nothing at all which they obiect. For in verie deede it is the same argument, or rather I may say, the same blinde cauill that the Priests and Pharisees made against our Saviour Christ, and against those that fol- lowed him, *Ioh. 7*. They gathered a councell, they sent their officers to apprehend

Iesus Christ, to shew to his seruants things which must shortly be done. The Lord Iesus, who hath loued his spouse, and washed her in his owne blood, hath so tender a care ouer her, that what may doe her good, and be for her felicitie while shee is here vpon earth in her pilgrimage in the midst of her foes, he cannot withhold it from her, wherefore receiuing this reuelation, he sendeth his Angell, and signifieth to his seruant *Iohn*, the disciple whome hee loued, that hee might receiue and publish the same. Behold then the loue of the Father, behold the loue of the Sonne in giuing this propheticie, to open to his seruants the things that should be done, before they come to passe. But still for the authoritie of the booke, it cometh from the high God, it is from Iesus the mediator, it is sent by an Angell, here is no blemish: but it cometh also from a man. In deede it cometh from a man, but from such a man, and in such sorte, that the authoritie is nothing at all diminished, for the holy Apostles and Prophets were but the instruments of the holy ghost, and deliuered nothing of their own, but whatsoever the spirite by them vttered: as it is written, *For the propheticie came not in olde time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moued by the holy ghoste.* 2. Pet. 1. This Saint *Iohn* respecteth when hee saith here of himselfe, *which bare record of the word of God, and of the testimonie of Iesus Christ, and of all things that he sawe.* He doth not here vtter any thing but as a faithfull witnes, euen as the tongue and penne of the holy ghost. Then is it our parte humble to stoope downe with all reuerence, to hearken to God, and to our Lord Iesus Christ, who in singular loue hath sent this reuelation vnto al his seruants. We must take heede that we despise not things comming from so great and so glorious a mediator, sending them vnto vs, for our speciall good. Thus much for the high authoritie of this booke.

Now come to the second part which expresth the singular fruite and commoditie which the faithfull shall receiue thereby. *Blessed is he that heareth, and they that read the words of this Prophecie, and keepe the things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.* What can be said more to stirre vs vp to reade, to heare and to imbrace with all good will and gladnes, the things which are sent vnto vs, and vttered in this booke? They be no trifles, they be not things onely for a shew to moue wonderment, or to delight the curious minde of man: but such as indeede, doe giue true blessednes vnto all those which are well instructed in them. What is greater, then to be blessed for euermore with all heauenly and spirituall blessings? And if we be not wonderfull dull, yea euen like stones and blockes, it must needs stirre vs vp. If it were said, he that heareth, and they that reade the wordes of this propheticie, and keepe the things that are written therein, shall finde plentie of riches, and rise vnto honour and dignitie here in the world, thousands would hearken vnto it: and shall we not set much more by true blessednes, in which we shall be made rich with the true treasure, and lifted vp into honour & glorie in the kingdome of God? Let not your blessednes be taken from you. Learne and keepe the things which are vttered in this propheticie: for otherwise it shall not make you blessed. For with reading and hearing he ioyneth the keeping of the things which are here written: As our Sauour saith in the Gospell, *Blessed are they that heare the word*

word of God, and keepe it. If we heare and reade, and doe not vnderstand, or if we vnderstand and careleslie forget, what are we the better? If euer you loue the blessing of God vpon your soules and bodies, learne and keepe the things which are written in this reuelation.

It may be said, was not this reuelation giuen many yeares after the ascension of Christ? The Church was without it in all that time, and yet was blessed. That doctrine which the Church had, which maketh men blessed, we haue in the other writings of the Prophets and Apostles. Why may we not then as well as they be without this booke? Did they want any of that doctrine which should make them blessed? Then the booke being hard to be vnderstood, what should wee trouble our selues for to vnderstand it? To this I answer, that ancient writers doe reporte that Saint *Iohn* was banished by *Domitian* the persecuting Emperour, into the Ile called *Patmos*, about the yeare of our Lord, 96. and then receiued this reuelation. It must needs be granted, that in all this time the Church had it not, and yet was blessed. We haue also all the doctrine in the other bookes of the scriptures, by which they became blessed: but yet all this doth not take away the necessarie vse of this booke, whereby the seruants of God shall be made blessed. There is in deede but one God, one redeemer, one faith, and one Church. The state of this Church according to the diuersities of times is diuers, being diuerslie assaulted. She is blessed by standing in the faith: then that is said to make her and her children blessed, which doth arme them in al their particular assaultes, and make them to stand in the faith. Great dangers were now at hand, most grievous things to behold raised vp by Sathan should follow the Gospell euen to disgrace it: the time of false prophetes which should seduce and deceiue, if it were possible euen the elect, Matth. 24. was now comming: Sathan was to be loosed, and to come with strong delusion to make men beleue lies. The dayes of the great Antichrist did now approach: the man of sinne, the aduersarie which should exalte himselfe, and sit in the Temple of God, 2. Thess. 2. he commeth as Christs vicar, chalenging to himselfe the power of Christ, as if none could be sau'd but by him, and so draweth vnder the shew of Christs power, the world to worship himselfe, and to worship the Dragon. Here be speciall assaultes and trials comming, and therefore there is neede of speciall armour: and that is the cause why our Sauour giueth this reuelation, and saith, the time is at hand. For some things were euen then shortly to be fulfilled, it was time for men to looke to this propheticie, and by it to put on armour. The Church in the time of the Apostles had her conflicts, but not these which now are to follow: They heard and were taught by the Apostles, that such things should come, but yet this propheticie which painteth out, and describeth things more cleerely and particularlie, was not giuen to them, because they did but heare of the dangers, and not indure the assault of them. Such as haue their eyes opened through the cleere light of the Gospell of Iesus Christ, looking into things past, may behold, besides other plagues described in this propheticie, the poperie, that is, the kingdome of the beast, that confused Babel, full of idolatries, blasphemies and cruell murders, euen like a darke cloude and huge tempest passed ouer, not yet vtterlie spent, but the remnant:

and the taylor of it remayning. They may also behold the grimme and terrible armie of the Turkes, which like a whirlewinde hath spread it selfe farre and neere, and laide all waste as it were with a tempest of mightie hayle. They may beholde a goodly part of this propheticie fulfilled in our dayes, and things to fall out fitly in all respects as they be in this propheticie described: he may see there are things yet behinde, whereof some bee darke, but when they come to passe, they will bee cleere. Then blessed is hee that readeth, and they that heare the wordes of this propheticie, and keepe the things which are written therein: for he shall be able to stand in the truth, and to ouercome all dangers. Thus wee see what authoritie this booke is of, coming from the high God through the mediation of our great Prophet Iesus Christ, and also what fruite euen vnto true blessednes we may receiue thereby: that we may with all dutifull reuerence be attentiu to learne, and then to loue as precious treasure that which we are here taught.

Having thus shewed you the summe of this title of the booke for the two many parts of it: I will now come to stand vpon some collection, wherein wee are to argue against the papists: for here is strong matter against them. First you see it is called a reuelation, which is as much as to say, an vncouering of things that did lie secret, for it is peculiar to God to know all his workes from the beginning, his counsels and decrees are secret to himselfe, vntill hee open them. What his Church should here vpon earth passe through, what combates and afflictions shee should sustaine, what victorie and glorie she shall at the last obtaine, hee hath before in his high wisdom and secret counsell decreed. What monstrous huge enemies should rise vp against her, what they shall deuise and practise, and how farre they shall preuaile, also what ouerthrow and destruction shall come vpon them, he hath likewise in the same his secret counsell appoynted. All these being most secret with God, are reuealed to the man Iesus Christ, who also reuealeth them to his seruant *Iohn*, and he by his commandement vnto the whole vniuersall Church. If it be a reuelation, then how say the Papists, that it is so darke, that very little in respect can be noted in it? Are the things so vncouered, that they bee still not to bee vnderstoode? How should it then be called a reuelation? All and euery part of this booke is a reuelation? Shall we say that the holy Ghost, the spirit of truth, hath giuen a wrong, yea a false title vnto it? For if it hide matters, or so set forth that they cannot be vnderstood, then is it not rightly called a reuelation. It may be they will then say, and are the matters in deede so clere and euident? Is there no hardnes in them? I haue already shewed, that this reuelation serueth the Church in her seuerall estate as the times fall out. Wherefore such things as were fulfilled in the dayes of the learned fathers were cleere vnto them, the things to come they could not vnderstand for the most part, but did grope at them. These are now fulfilled in our eyes, and are manifest, at the least the most of them: and the rest which remaine (vnles it bee some few) the tenor of the former things leadeth vs to see. Some things which yet remaine vnfulfilled, must needs be darke vntill the time come: but to haue this opinion, that all or the most parte of it is darke, is contrarie to the nature of a reuelation. The slouthfulness, the negligence and the contempt of holy things, that are in men,

men doe make it hard. The Lord himselfe expoundeth some mysteries in the first chapter, which giue cleere light especially to the first vision. The Angell expoundeth other, and especially in chap. 17. The writings of Moses and the Prophets, vnto which there bee sundrie allusions, and from which sundry things are drawn, doe manifest many things. So that indeede to bee ignorant in it, is either wilfully, or negligently to despise that which wee may, and ought to know vnto our happines. Then remember when thou hearest any go about by the hardnes of the book to dissuade from the reading, and hearing of it, I say remember, the Lord sayth it is a reuelation: be not so easily driuen away from it.

Moreover, if any bee readie to cauill further, and to say it is a reuelation, but not vnto all. It was giuen to *Iohn*, it might bee giuen likewise to some speciall men, which could tell how to vse it, but not for the vnlearned. In deede the Papists reason after such sort: but the next words doe quite cut them downe, when he sayth, *To shew to his seruants things which must shortly be done.* This is vnto all Gods seruants, men and women, young and olde, and therefore *Iohn* is commaunded to write all in a booke, and to send it to the seuen Churches of Asia. Marke well that he sayth, that this reuelation is giuen to Iesus Christ, to shew to his seruants, &c. If it cannot be interpreted, nor vnderstoode, how doth it, or how can it shew things? And if thou regard not or canst not vnderstand it, take heede, looke to thy selfe, least thou bee found none of Gods seruants, for it sheweth to the seruants of Christ things that must bee done. When the seruants of God which with all humilitie submitte themselues, and depend vpon him to bee taught, shall haue their eyes opened to see, the wicked proud world, and children of the world shall bee blinde, yea so blinde and so farre from vnderstanding this propheticie, that they shall fulfill the things which are prophesied in it. The popish clergie, the Cardinals, the Bishops, Abbots, and Iesuite Priests confesse, they do not nor can not vnderstand it: whereby it is most euident that they be not the seruants of Christ. Let none draw thee away with their cauils, desire the Lord to open thine eyes, that among the number of his seruants, the things may bee shewed vnto thee which this booke reuealeth. Lastly, if this booke be so darke and so mysticall, that it cannot be vnderstood: If the interpretation of it be vncertaine: Or if the common people cannot be taught to vnderstand it, and therefore are not to meddle with it: how should the holy Ghost say, *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that heare the words of this propheticie, and keepe the things which are written therein?* Let any man iudge that hath common sense, shall a man euer become blessed by reading or hearing those things which he can not vnderstand, or which hee is not to meddle withall? Iudge also in this, whether part are we to beleue? The Pope (who chalengeth to be the vicar of Christ, and so guided by the spirite of truth, that iudicially from his chaire hee cannot erre) sayth this is a booke dangerous for the people to meddle withall. The Cardinals, the prelates in that kingdome, the Iesuites and other beare men in hand that it is euen so, and that the safest way for the people is neuer to deale with it. The holy Ghost by the penne of Saint *Iohn* proclaimeth aloud, that they bee blessed which reade, heare, and keepe the matters here written. Who sayth the truth?

truth? for they can not both speake truth, their sayings be so flat contrary. Are ye not sure the holy Ghost doth speake the truth? Then doubt not but be as sure that the Pope and the Papists doe speake by a lying spirit, euen by the spirit of the deuill. Thus haue we in this first part of the preface, the high authority of this booke comming from the God of glorie, through the mediation of Iesus Christ, and the singular fruite which wee shall receiue thereby. Let it moue vs with reuerence to be attentiuē to the things vttered, to learne them, and to loue them, that wee may be blessed for euermore. Amen.



The second Sermon.

4. *Iohn to the seuen Churches which are in Asia, grace bee with yee, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come, and from the seuen spirits which are before his throne.*
6. *And from Iesus Christ, which is that faithfull witnes, and that first begotten of the dead, and that prince of the kings of the earth, vnto him that loued vs, and washed vs from our sinnes, in his blood,*
6. *And made vs kings and priests to God euen his father, to him I say, bee glorie and dominion, for euermore. Amen.*
7. *Behold he commeth with clouds, and euery eye shall see him, yea euen they which pearced him through, and all the kindreds of the earth shall waile before him, euen so, Amen.*
8. *I am Alpha, and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord which is, and which was, and which is to come, euen the almightie.*



As had in the three former verses, the title of this booke, being the first part of the preface: and here wee haue in these fve verses the second part, that is the salutation, or greeting, which *Iohn* sendeth to the seuen Churches. It was the vsuall manner of the Apostles, when they did write vnto any, to begin with salutation, testifying thereby how vehemently they did loue them, to whome they wrote, how well they did wish vnto them, praying for their saluation through the high blessing of God. *Iohn* was willed (as ye see afterward in this chapter) to write this reuelation, and to send it to seuen Churches of Asia, which are named vnto him, that they might receiue this prophetic, and deliuer forth true copies of it vnto other Churches. And before he

he will declare the visions which were shewed vnto him, he greeteth them louely. If we compare his salutation with that which *Paul* & the rest vse in their Epistles, we shall find in substance of matter no difference at all: but in the manner and order he differeth, vsing such a style, and such descriptions, as are agreeing to the maiestie of this booke.

Consider the things in particular, as they bee set downe. Touching the matter wished in the salutations vpon those to whome they write, Saint *Paul* wisheth grace and peace, to the Romanes, to the Corinthians, Galathians, Ephesians, &c. and sometime, grace, mercie, and peace, as to *Timothie*, and vnto *Titus*. Saint *Iohn* craueth the same things for the Churches to which he sendeth: As ye see, *Iohn* to the seuen Churches which are in Asia, grace bee with ye, and peace, &c. If ye will demand what is meant by grace and peace, they signifie the free fauour and good will of God towards men, and all good thinges which flow from the same. In a word, when the Apostles wish for grace and peace, they pray for all spirituall blessings in heavenly thinges, as Saint *Paul* speaketh, Ephes. 1. they pray for all the rich and precious treasures which are giuen vs in Christ, and manifested by the glorious Gospell. Whereupon I may here by the way note one thing briefly, touching the true ministers of Christ, what propertie they haue: For wee all confesse that the blessed Apostles were faithfull ministers indeede, and great patterns for all other to follow. They spent their strength in labouring, they passed through all dangers and perils, to display and to manifest vnto the people the riches of the grace of God in Christ Iesus. It was loue onely that constrained them, both the loue they bare to Christ, to his truth and glorie, and the loue and pitie which they bare vnto men. Wherefore as they did preach the grace of God which bringeth saluation, so did they instantly pray, that the people might be partakers of the same, vnto their eternall blessednes. The ministers which followe these steppes, are in the right way: but if they preach and labour for filthie lucre, in respect of wordly benefites; if they preach to magnifie themselues, to seeke their owne glorie, they bee not then true seruants of Christ, although they should preach the truth. For if they seeke their owne, and not the things which are Christs, is not their belly their God? as Saint *Paul* speaketh, Philip. 3. Let all that labour in the ministerie, not onely studie to find out the truth, and to lay it open, but also pray and wishe that the people may imbrace the same vnto their eternall blessednes. Saint *Paul* wisheth grace and peace from God the father, and from our Lorde Iesus Christ, not mentioning the holy Ghost: but *Iohn* here craueth grace and peace from all the three persons in the most blessed Trinitie, which may seeme to be some difference, but verily in effect, there is no difference at all. For when the holy Ghost is not expressly named in the salutation of the Apostles, yet hee is not excluded, seeing he is the worker of all in the hearts of men: and therefore in deede there is no difference but only in the expresse mention, betweene *Iohn* and the other Apostles. Also this may be noted, that the vsuall placing of the persons is in this order, the Father, the Sonne, and the holy Ghost. But *Iohn* beginneth with the Father, then next the holy Ghost, and so cometh to the Sonne in the third place. This may not seeme strange, seeing there is

the same degree of dignitie in one person aboue another: the Father is not greater then the Sonne, the Sonne is not greater then the holy Ghost. They bee all of the same power, maiestie, and glorie, none is before or after other. And it was more conuenient that Saint *Iohn* should here set our Sauour in the third place, because he maketh a large description of him, and in the same speaketh of the last iudgement, and so from thence commeth fitly to conclude his salutation in that high and magnificall manner which he doth.

Now let vs see the description of euery person in the Deitie. He speaketh of the Father thus, *Grace and peace from him which is, and which was, and which is to come.* That is as much as to say, from him that is eternall, immortall, and vchangeable, who hath his being of himselfe, and giueth vnto all creatures their being. Saint *Iohn* (as it seemeth) by these three wordes which hee writeth in the Greeke, would expresse the force of the name of God *Iehoua* in the Hebrewes, or of *Ebeie*, Exodus the third. Whom (sayth *Moses*) shall I say hath sent me? Answer is made, say *Ebeie* hath sent me vnto ye: that is, I will be, or as they say, the future tense may haue all times included in it, and so it is as much as to say, I am, I was, and I will be, hath sent me vnto yee. It may here be objected, is not the Sonne *Iehoua*, or *Ebeie*, he that is, and he that was, and hee that is to come? Is not the holy Ghost also *Iehoua*? I answer, that respecting the essence, the Father, the Sonne, and the holy Ghost, are but one and the selfe same eternall, immortall, and vchangeable God: but *Iohn* speaketh here distinguishing the persons. And the Sonne being begotten of the Father, the holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and the Sonne, the Father in this distinguishing of the persons, is propounded as the fountaine of the Deitie, and the fountaine of all being, of life, of grace, and peace. According to this we shall find sundry places of scripture, as when hee sayth, *God so loved the worlde, that he gaue his onely begotten Sonne, that whosoever belieueth in him should not perish, but haue life euerlasting,* Ioh. 3. *God was in Christ reconciling the worlde to himselfe, not imputing their sinnes,* 2. Cor. 5. *Because yee are sonnes, God hath sent the spirite of his sonne into your hearts, which crieth Abba, Father,* Galath. 4.

Then next hee wisheth grace and peace from the holy Ghost, the worker of all grace in the faithfull, saying, and from the seuen spirits which are before his throne. There be sundry giftes, and sundry operations, and yet but one holy Ghost, how doth Saint *Iohn* then call him seuen spirits? This hath caused some to take it of the Angels, not that Saint *Iohn* should wish grace and peace from them, as from the authors of grace and peace, but as they stand as ministring spirits before the throne. And vpon this the Iesuites of Rhemes lay hold, saying, that the holy Ghost may bee here meant, and so called for his manifold graces. But they say it seemeth more probable, that hee speaketh this of the holy Angels: and so they conclude, it must needes be confessed that grace and peace is wished by the Apostle, not onely from God, but also from his Angels. And hereupon they inferre, that it is not superstitious, but an apostolicall speech, to say God and our Ladie blesse vs, God and his Angels, or God and any of his Saints helpe vs, or blesse vs. But there are reasons in deede sufficient to proue, that these seuen spirits bee the holy Ghost, and not the ministring

ministring Angels. Let it be a light reason that these seuen spirites are placed betwene the Father and the Sonne, as proceeding from them both, and of equal maiestie and authoritie: yet wee must note that grace and peace is wished from these seuen spirites, euen with the same manner of speech, that they bee wished from the Father and the Sonne, the coniunction coupling them all in one. Againe, Saint *Iohn* speaketh of the holy Ghost as he appeareth vnto him in vision in this reuelation. Here are seuen Churches which represent all Churches. The holy Ghost did worke so fully and perfectly in euery one of these seuen, as if he had beene in euery one a seuerall spirite, (as also in all and euery one through the whole worlde) and for that cause is shewed in vision chap. 4. as seuen lampes burning before the throne, called there the seuen spirites of God. The holy Angels bee the Lords ministers, but neuer I thinke in the scriptures called the spirites of God. Euery Angell in deed is in some sense a spirite of God, but when the Scripture sayth the spirite of God, it is the holy Ghost. Moreouer, the Angels are before the throne, and about the throne, but proceede not out of the throne: but the holy Ghost sent and proceeding from the Father and the Sonne, commeth forth of the throne. For it is sayd, there proceeded out of the throne, lightnings, and thundrings, and voices, and seuen lampes of fire, burning before the throne. Doth not the construction carrie it plainly, that these lampes which burne before the throne proceeded out of the throne? Also the holy Angels, although they bee imployed in the seruice of Christ, exercising his power and prouidence, yet the holy Ghost is in a most high and peculiar manner the eyes and hornes of the Lambe, that is, his absolute wisdom and power: as in the sixth chapter these seuen spirites of God are called the eyes and hornes of the lambe: by these the lambe openeth the scales of the booke. These seuen lampes, seuen eyes, and seuen hornes, do not worship before the throne, as the other. Wherefore wee may take it for certaine that Saint *Iohn* here doth wish grace and peace, as from the Father in the first place, so from the holy Ghost in the next, who is the worker of all grace and peace in the hearts of men.

In the third place, hee wisheth grace and peace from Iesus Christ: hee is the mediatur betwene God and man. Hee alone hath wrought the reconciliation, hee is our peace-maker that hath brought vs into fauour with God: worthily therefore doth he wish grace and peace from him. He doth not, as yee see in bare tearmes, according to the vsuall manner, wish grace and peace from Iesus Christ, but setteth him forth with a godly description, full of excellent glorie, touching euery part of his office, and the communicating the same with vs. The parts of his office are in these, that hee is the great Prophet, the mighty Prince, and mercifull high Priest. The first is expressed in these words, *That faithfull witnes.* He as the Prince of all Prophets, brought all the counsels of God, and reuealed them vnto men. As it is written, *No man hath seene God at any time, the onely begotten sonne which is in the bosome of the Father, he hath declared him,* Ioh. 1. vers. 18. Hee did beare record to the truth euery way: for being apprehended, brought before *Pilate*, and accused, he asked him, *Art thou a King?* Hee answered, *for this cause was I borne, and for this cause came I into the worlde, that I might beare witnes to the truth.*

Ioh. 18. vers. 27. Wherefore Saint Paul sayth, *He witnessed under Pontius Pilate, a good confession*, 1. Timoth. 6. he opened al truth, and sealed it vp with his blood. But it may be demanded, Did not all the Prophets set forth the truth, and beare record to the same as faithfull witnesses? Did not the holy Apostles the same? Haue not the Martyrs also sealed it in some sort, with their blood? What is here then ascribed vnto Christ, which is not common with him vnto them? What matter of excellent glorie is here giuen vnto him? True it is that the Prophets and Apostles set forth the sound truth, and bare record vnto it, & are of right to be called faithfull witnesses: but yet our Lord Iesus Christ is here by an excellency farre above them all, set in a peculiar glorie to himselfe alone, when he sayth, *That faithfull witnes*. For he is not here called a faithfull witnes, as one among the rest: but as the Prince and head of all Prophets and witnesses, from whom they all receiued their light, and the truth vnto which they bare record. For he being the eternall wisdom of the Father, as Salomon bringeth in wisdom speaking, Prouerb. 8. saying, *God possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his workes, before there was any time. Before the world was I annoynted, before the beginning, before the beginnings of the earth. When there were no deepes was I begotten, when there were no fountaines abounding with waters. Before the mountaines were fixed, before the hills was I begotten. He had not yet made the earth, &c.* He is also as Saint Paul sayth, *made vnto vs of God, wisdom*. 1. Cor. 1. ver. 30. *In him are all the treasures of wisdom, and knowledge hidden*. Coloss. 2. ver. 3. All the Prophets from the beginning of the world had their doctrine from him. He gaue them his spirite to instruct them in his counsels. Hee hauing with his owne mouth vttered and preached the whole Gospel when he walked vpon the earth, after his resurrection ascended into heauen, and according to his promise sent downe the holy Ghost vpon his Apostles, *which* (as he sayth) *should teach them all things, and bring to their remembrance all things which he had sayd*, Ioh. 14. ver. 26. This spirite he sayth should glorifie him, because hee should take of his, and shew vnto them. Then yee see his glorie, when he saith, *That faithfull witnes*: namely, that he is the Prince of al Prophets, hauing a singular glorie herein above all the rest. Woe bee to them which will not giue credite to his testimonie: but despise the words of his mouth.

Then next he describeth him as the most mightie king in these words, *That first begotten of the dead, and Prince of the kings of the earth*. Here be two parts in this glorious and kingly estate of Christ. The one is touching his victorie and conquest, ouer all the mightie enemies: and the other is in his exaltation in glory, and princely maiesty at the right hande of God, in which hee shall raigne for euer and euer. The former of these is expressed thus, *That first begotten of the dead*. The conquest ouer death and ouer Satan, was by dying and rising againe from the dead. Satan preuayled against our first parents, cast them downe into thraldome with all their children. Now as man was ouercome by Satan, and brought into captiuitie, so the Lord God will haue a man to triumph ouer Satan, and to deliuer the captiues from vnder his tyrannie. The eternall wisdom of the Father tooke our nature, as it is sayd, *The word was made flesh*, Ioh. 1. *And God sent his sonne made of a woman*. Galath.

Galath. 4. and in the same nature of ours as a most mighty king triumphed ouer Satan, and ouer death it selfe. *By a man came death, and by a man came the resurrection from the dead*. 1. Cor. 15. Also the Lord had decreed, not onely that the seede of the woman should breake the serpents head, but also that it should bee brought to passe, euen by that ouer which Satan hath his dominion and lordship, that is, by death. He tooke the humane nature that he might taste of death, and by death ouercome the Deuill and death it selfe. The holy Ghost setteth foorth these things, saying, *Because therefore the children were partakers of flesh and blood, hee also in like maner tooke part of the same, that by death, he might abolish him that hath the lordship ouer death, that is the deuill*. Hebr. 2. vers. 14. *This is the king of glorie, the Lord strong and mightie, the Lord mighty in battaile*. Psalm. 24. He encountred by his death, with Satan and with death, rising againe victoriously, and so is *That first begotten of the dead*. In his crosse, *Hee spoyled principalities and powers, and led them in shew openly triumphing ouer them*. Coloss. 2. vers. 15. *He is ascended up on high, and hath led captiuitie captiue*: Ephes. 4. vers. 8. Hee is called the first begotten from the dead, because all his brethren, euen all the redeemed, shall in their time through the vertue of this his mighty conquest, bee raised vp, and set free from the bondage of corruption. Hee must raigne vntill all his enemies bee made his footstool. *He shall put downe all rule, and all authoritie: and death shall be swallowed up into victorie*: 1. Cor. 15. This is the glorious victorie of our king, expressed in these words, *That first begotten of the dead*.

The other part touching the glorious maiesty, in which he doth raigne and in which hee shall raigne for euer more, is vttered in these wordes, *That Prince of the kings of the earth*. He to whom all power is giuen in heauen and earth, as he sayth, Matth. 28. He that is exalted at the right hand of God, as the Apostle sayth, *Farre above all principallitie, and power, and might, and Lordship, and euery name that is named, not onely in this world, but also in that to come*. Ephes. 1. vers. 21. *Hee to whom all knees shall bowe, of things in heauen, of things in earth, and of things vnder the earth*. Philip. 2. vers. 10. *Hee that is ascended farre above all heauens, that hee might fill all things*. Ephes. 4. vers. 10. Euen he, must needs be the prince of all the kinges of the earth: for his kingdome being ouer the heauenly mightes and dominations, and hauing subdued the infernall powers, it is much more ouer the kinges of the earth. Thus ye see the glorious triumphant king, the man Iesus which was raised from the dead.

Now in the thrd place hee describeth him, as our most mercifull high Priest, in this sort: *To him that hath loued vs and washed vs from our sinnes in his blood*. Here are two members in this part of the description, his loue, as hee sayth, *To him that hath loued vs*, and the effectuall declaration of the same, in this, *and hath washed vs from our sinnes in his blood*. What greater proofe of his loue can there be then this? Wee were all of vs vnclane sinners, most vgly, foule, the children of wrath, heires of destruction. That he might reconcile vs to his Father, he tooke our burden vpon him, *He bare our sinnes in his body vpon the tree*: 1. Pet. 2. vers. 24. *Hee was made sinne for vs, that we in him might be made the righteousnes of God*. 2. Cor. 5. vers. 21.

To deliuer vs from the curse of the law, *He was made the curse*, Galath. 3. ve. 13. And was is not a wonderfull loue, that hee should giue vp himselfe to death, euen to endure all torments and sorrowes, for vncleane sinners? If when wee were enemies, and deserued nothing but hatred and curse, he loued vs, and gaue vp himselfe to be a ranfome for vs: how should we now doubt of his loue, when his blood hath purged vs from our sinnes? The Priestes vnder the lawe of *Moses*, did offer sacrifices of flaine beastes, whose blood did not wash away sinne, but was a figure and a shadowe of the blood of this vnspotted Lambe of God, which purgeth away all our sinne: as we may reade in the epistle to the Hebrewes. The holy word doth teach vs, that there is no other purging away of any sinne, but onely in this blood of the Lambe: as it is written, *If we walke in the light, as he is in the light, we haue fellowship one with another: and the blood of Iesus Christ his sonne cleanseth us from all sinne.* 1. Ioh. 1. ver. 7. The Papists ascribe to the blood of Christ the washing away of originall sinne: but actuall sinnes, if they be after baptisme, they will haue to bee taken away and discharged, by satisfactions of our owne. Yea they haue so manie kinds of satisfactions, indulgences, merites, blood of Martyrs, and purgatorie, that it is very little which they leaue to the blood of Christ. This wicked blasphemous sacriledge against the glorie of the crosse of Christ they do still maintaine: not considering that they make many things equall in power and dignitie with his death and precious blood: For if any thing can purge away sinne, where is the glory of his passion that hath companions in that worke of purging sinnes? Is that great glory, which doth but that which many other things doe? The false Apottles which taught that men should bee iustified and saued, partly by Christ, and partly by the workes of the lawe, are therefore by Saint *Paul* called the enemies of the crosse of Christ: and are not then the Papists which will not ascribe the purging of all sinnes onely to the blood of the Lambe, to bee reputed and teamed blasphemous aduersaries to his passion? We doe confesse that of tender compassion and loue towards vs, as a most mercifull high Priest, hee offered vp himselfe in sacrifice, euen a flaine sacrifice for the sinnes of the world, and so with his blood hath washed away all our sinnes, and reconciled vs to his Father. Thus wee see the description of our Sauour in euery part of his office: now next in that he communicateth the same with vs.

And made vs Kings and Priests to God euen his father. He is not annoynted King and Priest to himselfe alone, but we are also through him annoynted Kings and Priests, euen to the most high God. They be great benefites, and great dignities which are here spoken of, and shall so appeare vnto vs, if we consider the toppe of the glorie vnto which we are aduanced in them, and the bottome of our base estate, out of which we are drawne. We were in bondage vnto our lustes, and seruants vnto sinne. A vile flauerie: being annoynted with his spirite, our olde man is crucified with the lustes and concupiscences, so that they raigne not ouer vs, but as mightie kings, through his mighty grace wee bring them vnder and subdue them. A prince in the world ouer men, that is bond to his lustes and serueth them, is a base seruant: And a poore man that through the work of grace subdueth the, is a mighty prince. This *Salomon* respecteth in his booke called *Ecclesiastes*, when hee sayth,

I sawe seruants upon horses: and princes walking upon the ground like seruants. chap. 10. ver. 7. We were in bondage vnto Satan the prince of darkenes, obeying him and doing his will: but being annoynted with the spirite of Christ, wee treade him downe as mighty princes, vnder our feet, and as a pray are deliuered from him, and as captiues are set free from the hands of such cruell power. We were captiues, in bondage vnto death, vnto eternall shame and miserie: but being annoynted with the holy Ghost, we shall bee rayfed vp from death in great triumph and glorie, to raigne for euer and euer with our head Iesus Christ. We were the children of wrath, through our vncleannes; hee hath washed vs in his blood, and made vs the sonnes of God, and that is, hee hath made vs great kings. For the children of Emperours and kings here in the world inherite riches and glorie, and are borne princes. All the kings of the earth are but beggers, being compared vnto him; then must his children of necessitie all of them, be great kings and princes: and who is able to expresse with any words, the riches and the glorie, which they shall inherite? Hee bestoweth many good things in this worlde vpon all, but how great are the things which they shall inioy, whom he maketh kings? This is a blessing doubled vpon vs; for to be deliuered from the miserie and basenes is much: but then to bee aduanced so high is more. How vehemently ought we to pray, *Let thy kingdome come?* It is a blessed kingdome. How well is it with those that are made kings to God? It may be sayd, if the beleeuers be lifted vp by Christ into such a dignitie; how cometh it to passe that they be so base and so despised in the world? If a man come into the presence of a kinges sonne, by and by hee is moued with a reuerence, and sheweth that he doth regarde and honour him. But they that professe the Gospell, and to be the sonnes of God, are base and contemptible in the eyes of men. Saint *Iohn* answereth this in an other place, saying, *See what loue the Father hath giuen vs, that we should be called the sonnes of God. Therefore the world knoweth vs not, because it knoweth not him. Beloued we are now the sonnes of God, but it doth not appeare what we shall be: we know that when hee shall be made manifest, we shall bee like vnto him: because we shall see him as hee is.* 1. Ioh. 3. ver. 1. 2. To the same purpose it may be cited, which Saint *Paul* speaketh, Rom. 8. ver. 19. of the reueling of the sonnes of God. We must then not looke vpon the present estate of the faithfull, but what it shall be; for here the sonnes of God which shall shine in glorie as kings, doe lye subiect vnto contempt, vnto basenes, vnto reproches, and vnto manifolde miseries. Being washed then in the blood of the Lambe, and cleansed from all our sinnes, wee are already the sonnes of God, we are kings, but we may not looke to come to the glorie in this world.

Now for the other, that he hath made vs priests to God euen his Father? This may seeme to bee but a small matter, vntill we consider what it is to bee priestes to God. Nothing that is polluted and prophane can haue accesse vnto God to abide in his presence. A Priest to God is sanctified and priuiledged to come vnto him euen with fauour. As euery prophane thing is abominable to God, so euery gift and oblation offered vnto him by such prophane ones is reiected: But a sanctified priest to God offering vp giftes and sacrifices, the same are delightfome and acceptable

vnto him. We are all of vs by nature vncleane, prophane and abominable to him, and quite shut out from hauing any accesse into his presence. There were priests of old time that did approach and offer gifts and sacrifices which were accepted, but they were figures of Christ, and offered vp all in his mediation: for hee alone is our priest that hath sanctified vs with his owne blood, and made the way for vs to enter euen vnto the throne of grace, and as holy priestes to offer vp such sacrifices as doe please him. We are not made Priests as in the lawe to offer carnall sacrifices, according to the law of the carnall commandement, (as the holy Ghost speaketh, Hebr. 7. vers. 16.) but we are priests to offer spirituall sacrifices. Wee are made *An holie Priesthoode, to offer vp spirituall sacrifices acceptable to God through Iesus Christ*: 1. Pet. 2. vers. 5. We are to consecrate our bodies a sacrifice liuing, holy and acceptable to God, Rom. 12. vers. 1. And as it is written, *We must alwayes by him* (that is euen by Christ) *offer to God the sacrifice of praise, that is the fruite of the lippes which confesse his name. To doe good and to distribute forget not, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.* Hebr. 13. vers. 15. 16. These be spirituall sacrifices, therefore all true Christians may be called spirituall Priests, and no one man is more a Priest then another, no not euen the holy Apostles, *Peter*, or *Paul*, or *Iohn*, or any other; neither is there any other Priesthood remayning among men, but this spirituall Priesthood. The Iesuite Papists in their annotations doe graunt that al true Christians be spirituall priests to God: but to say that all be priests alike, or that there ought to be none but such spirituall priests, they cry out vpon, and say it is the seditious voyce of *Core*, who sayd to *Moses* and *Aaron*, are not all the Lords people holy? They vse this argument, that as he should be a seditious heretike, that would reason thus, all Gods children are kings, therefore there ought to be no other earthly powers or kings to gouerne in worldly affayres ouer Christians: so are they seditious heretikes that vpon this place or the like would inferre, that euery one in a proper signification is a priest, or that all be priests alike, or that there ought to be none but such spirituall Priests. We doe not reason so, they leaue out that vpon which we stand. The holy scripture doth teach that all true Christians bee spirituall kings, and yet that there bee other kinges also to gouerne ouer Christians, and ouer all other. The scripture sayth, al are priests to offer vp spirituall sacrifice; we say that the scripture doth not teach that there be any other priests, but these spirituall priests. They affirme that there be other priests so properly called, which offer vp in sacrifice the Lord Iesus to his Father. This is wicked blasphemie, and as they can not shewe by the worde of God that any such sacrifice remayneth to be offered for the quicke and the dead: so can they not shew that the holy Apostles or any other ministers of the Gospell were called priests. When I say they be not any of them called priests in a proper signification restrained to a ministry, I meane such priests as offer sacrifice: For the word Priest is vsed confusedly in our tongue; for if our english word Priest come of *Presbyter*, then in that sence *Peter* may be called a Priest; seeing he was *Presbyter*, as he calleth himselfe, 1. Pet. 5. vers. 1. and so are all ministers of the Gospell priests. For Bishoppes, Pastors, and Teachers, are all called *Presbyteri*, that is elders, euen for their office and ministerie. But when priest is vsed for a sacrificer, then shall we find

that

that neither *Peter* nor any other is called a Priest, that is a sacrificer, otherwise then all Christians are called Priests or sacrificers. All Christians are not *presbyteri*, for that is proper to the ministerie and Church gouernours: but all Christians be sacrificers alike, there is no sacrifice which some offer, and not other some.

Vpon this mention of the benefite of Christ, *S. Iohn* breaketh forth into his prayse, saying, *To him be glorie and dominion for euermore, Amen.* Hee that is the faithfull witnes, euen the Prince of all Prophets: hee that as our mightie King hath ouercome for vs death and the diuell, and is exalted at the right hand of God: Hee that as our mercifull high Priest hath loued vs and washed vs in his blood from our sinnes: He that hath made vs Kings and Priests to God euen his father: is not hee worthie of all glorie and dominion for euermore? Whosoeuer he be that feeleth that he is thus deliuered by Christ from destruction, and aduanced to such dignitie and glorie: how can hee stay, but breake forth with *S. Iohn* into praising and glorifying of Christ? In deed if we feele not our selues partakers of his glorie, our hearts are still shut vp, and our tongues are tied from glorifying him with ioye and delight. It may be said, hath he made vs only Kings and Priests? Hath hee not also made vs Prophets? Yes, hee hath also made vs Prophets: though *S. Iohn* doth not mention that, he hath giuen vs knowledge of heauenly mysteries. *I will power out of my spirite* (saith he) *upon all flesh, and your sonnes and your daughters shall prophesie, &c.* Act. 2. 17. Reioyce then in the Lorde Iesus, and praise him with gladnes of hart, that hath done so great things for vs. Let not this vaine world, nor the transitorie things which be in it, that are in deed in comparison but beggarlie trash, so bewitch and befotte our mindes, as to set light by these heauenly treasures and dignities. For doubtles such as set their harts vpon the lustes of this world, neuer regard these heauenly dignities.

He addeth one thing further vnto this description of Christ, and that is his glorious comming to iudge the quicke and the dead. *Behold he commeth with cloudes, and euery eye shall see him, yea euen they which pearced him through: and all the kindreds of the earth shall waile before him, euen so, Amen.* Why is this his comming to Iudgement here described? Because all this glorie and dignitie shall then bee made manifest, not onely to the children of God which shall inherite the same, but also euen to the wicked. The glorie of Christ is now published, and how he doth communicate the same with his redeemed: but all this glorie, both in his person, and in his chosen, is seene of vs only by faith. It is farre remoued from our bodilie senses. We see not him, and we feele our selues subiect vnto great basenes, and vnto a thousand calamities. Saint *Iohn* lifteth vp our mindes vnto this daye, saying, *behold he commeth with cloudes, &c.* The Kings and great Iudges of this world haue a pompe and maiestie when they sit in iudgement, but nothing comparable to this that he shall come with cloudes, to sit vpon the throne of his glorie. And then euery eye shall see him. Not onely the godly shall behold the King in his glorie, but also all the wicked, euen the worst that euer haue been; yea his aduersaries that did so cruelly murder him, shall be constrained to their shame and endles sorrow to looke vpon him, and vpon the glory of his saints, whom they so hated and despised.

despised. Then shall all the prophane people, euen al the kindreds of the earth waile before him: their sorrow shall then come vpon them, but all too late to finde any place for mercie at his hands whom they haue so despised. They now hate and despise his word, they rayle vpon those which professe it: then shall come their punishment: for then shall they giue account for all their wicked deedes. When he commeth with cloudes, and when euery eye shall see him, euen the eyes that now are the eyes of the dead, as well as the eyes of the liuing, yee see there shall bee two sortes of people: the one sort shall lift vp their heads and reioyce, for the day of their redemption is come. The other sort shall lament and mourne, and crie out dolefully with bitter grieve and sorrowe, because the daye of wrath and vengeance is come vpon them. I praye you thinke well of this, and walke so carefully now, and so wisely, that when that day commeth, ye may not be of that company which shall houle and lament, but of those which with great ioy shall be crowned with glory to raigne with Christ. He that doth not studie now to knowe the waies of God, and to walke in them, that he may at this second comming of the Lord be blessed, he is more then a foole, yea is more then madde. All our whole life ought to tende to this, that we may be accepted in that day: and marke how Saint Iohn doth confirme this with a double affirmation, the one in a greeke word, and the other in an hebrew word, which is, Amen, which is, so be it. By this he doth not only set downe the certaintie of his comming, but declareth his vehement desire for the same: and thereby he giueth vs an example euen to long for it. For then the kingdome of Sathan shall be quite put downe, Sathan and the wicked shall be shut vp in the prison of hell: the glory of Christ shall shine forth in full perfection, and his Saints shall be glorified with him. For both these respects, wee haue cause to long and to praye for the comming of this great day.

Now remaineth the conclusion or shutting vp of this salutation, and it is a confirmation of this grace and peace to come from GOD alone, who is (as hee saith) *Alpha*, and *Omega*, that is the beginning and the ending, for *Alpha* is the first of the greeke letters, and *Omega* is the last: he was before all, and gaue to euery creature the being, hee continueth for euer, and supporteth all. Hee is eternall and vnchangeable, that is, that was, and that is to come: hee is that Almightye, exercising his power and prouidence ouer all. And here wee may note, that where as before in the distinguishing of the persons in the Trinitie, *he that is, he that was, and he that is to come*, is spoken of the father, here to declare the vnitie of substance, it is spoken of the whole three persons. Thus much for the salutation of S. Iohn to the Churches.



The



The third Sermon.

9. *I Iohn euen your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the Kingdome and patience of Iesus Christ, was in the Ile called Patmos, for the worde of God, and for the witnessing of Iesus Christ.*
10. *And I was in the spirite vpon the Lords day, and heard behinde mee, a great voyce, as it had been of a trumpet,*
11. *Saying: I am Alpha, and Omega, that first, and that last, that which thou seest write in a booke, & send it, to the seuen Churches which are in Asia, vnto Ephesus, and vnto Smyrna, and vnto Pergamus, and vnto Thyatira, and vnto Sardis, and vnto Philadelphia, and vnto Laodicea.*
12. *Then I turned backe to see the voyce that spake with me: and when I was turned, I saw seuen golden candlesticks.*
13. *And in the midst of the candlesticks, one like vnto the Sonne of man, clothed with a garment downe to the feete, and girded about the pappes with a golden girdle.*
14. *His head and hayres were white, as white woll, and as snowe, and his eyes were as a flame of fire.*
15. *And his feete like vnto fine brasse, burning as in a furnace, and his voyce like vnto the sound of many waters.*
16. *And hee had in his right hand seuen starres: and out of his mouth went a sharpe two edged sword, and his face shone as the sunne shineth in his strength.*
17. *And when I saw him, I fell at his feete as dead, then hee laide his right hand vpon me, saying vnto me, feare not, I am that first, and that last:*
18. *And am aline, but I was dead, and behold I am aline for euermore, Amen. And I haue the keyes of hell and of death.*
19. *Write the things which thou hast scene, and the things which are, and the things which shall come hereafter.*
20. *The mysteria of the seuen Starres which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seuen golden candlesticks is this: the seuen Starres are the Angels of the seuen Churches: and the seuen candlesticks, are the seuen Churches.*



After the preface consisting of the title of this booke, & of the salutation to the Churches, Saint Iohn commeth now to his narration, and declareth the first vision which was shewed vnto him, contained in three chapters. It shall not be amisse to lay open vnto you in the first place, to what end and purpose this vision serued, which is threefold: for first it was to call

and authorise Saint *Iohn* to write: secondly, to set vp the authority of this prophetic: and thirdly, to declare in what estate the Church then present vpon the earth was.

Touching the calling and authorising of *S. Iohn*, it may be said, was he not one of the Lambes twelue Apostles, and had now many yeares executed the office of the Apostleship right faithfully? What needed he, being an Apostle, to be called againe, or to bee authorised? It may be answered, that this is a new and a speciall worke, and therefore requireth a new and a speciall calling. Againe, it is as God dealt with the old Prophets: for when he would foreshew great and speciall matters, hee called diuers of them by very glorious visions: as yee may reade what a goodly vision *Esaie* had, chap. 6. what a vision full of heavenly glory *Ezechiel* had, chap. 1. And what a vision the Prophet *Daniel* had, chap. 10. euen in maiestie like vnto this which Saint *Iohn* hath here. Thus it is then to be considered: *Iohn* is as the olde Prophets to foreshew things to come, therefore the Lord appeareth vnto him in vision, and calleth him and authoriseth him thereunto, as he appeared vnto them and called them. Thus much for the first end, to which this first vision serued.

The second is (as I sayd) to set vp the authority of the booke it selfe: which thing is to be drawne from the high maiestie, and glorie, and power of him that appeareth in the vision, vpon which I neede not to stay.

The third thing is, that this first vision is to declare in what estate the vniuersall Church vpon the earth was at that present time. For when the Lord would reueale in what case his Church should bee euen to the worlds end, hee first declareth the present estate thereof. In deede there are but seuen Churches named, the seuerall estate of euery one of which is opened in the two next chapters: but vnder these seuen, among which some were in better or more perfect case then other, the state of the whole vniuersall Church militant is laid open. It had been a matter infinite to reckon vp all the particular Churches that were then in the world, and to haue opened their estate. Therefore as this prophetic, which is for all the seruants of God in what Church soeuer, is sent but to those seuen by name: so vnder those seuen, all other Churches are comprised.

These three things thus in generall obserued, now let vs come to the vision, to euery branch of the words in order as they lie, in which there be many particulars which concerne the person that is called, the person that calleth, and the Churches whose estate is laide open. Hee beginneth with himselfe who was called by this vision, saying, *I Iohn, euen your brother and companion in affliction, and in the Kingdome, and patience of Iesus Christ, &c.* Let it not seeme strange that hee nameth himselfe againe, for this is at his calling, as ye shall reade in the Prophet, when hee expresth those great visions, how often he repeateth, *I Daniel*. But I may here againe speake a little touching the former obiection. Was not the office of the Apostleship, the highest degree of authoritie among the ministeries of the Church? And was not Saint *Iohn* an Apostle? And did not the Apostles prophetic of things to come? Yea, but this prophetic which Saint *Iohn* receiueth here goeth further then that which the Apostles had, it is a speciall reuelation, and therefore hee hath a new calling vnto it, which hee doth not in vaine mention, saying, *I Iohn*. In the
next

next place hee giueth himselfe certaine titles, but not such as are swelling or pompous, no not euē such as he might, as the title of an Apostle or Prophet, but of a brother to all the faithfull, and of a companion with all those which were afflicted and persecuted for the Gospell of Christ, vnder hope of the glory to come. But why may some say, did he not here take the title of an Apostle or of a Prophet, seeing he is to commend the authoritie of the booke? Was it not lawfull for the Apostles and Prophets to take those titles? yes, but here was a particular respect, for which *Iohn* setteth himselfe so lowe: for surely, I suppose that Saint *Iohn* hath the same minde here that Saint *Paul* telleth of himselfe, 2. Cor. 12. He (I meane *Paul*) was highly exalted with visions, and reuelations, and being forced to glory and boast against the false Apostles, and euill men, hee durst not enter into the glorying and boasting in those visions and reuelations in his owne name, or vnder his owne person, for feare least he might in some sort bee puffed vp, carying still in him the remnants of the olde man: but chose more gladly as he saith, to glory of those things wherein he was humbled and abased: for hee did glory in his infirmities, and that most gladly. *Iohn*, as yee seethrough this booke is admitted to see great things, goodly visions and reuelations are shewed him: but he will not glory in them, hee will not lift vp himselfe on high by them, but of purpose cometh downe, and sitteth among the poore distressed and persecuted, saying, your brother and companion in affliction, &c. O worthy example of two so noble instruments: how farre the proud and vaine nature of man is from this, which they haue shewed may euidently appeare by many: who if they can skill in some arte, and doe excell others, or can vtter a few sillables in learned tongues, and speake rhetorically, though these be nothing in comparison to that which is giuen to *Iohn*, or to *Paul*, yet they flye vp and mount aloft, and looke with disdain ouer simple men, not as companions, but as if in comparison of them they were petty Gods. The Lord giue vs grace, euen the grace of his spirite, to frame our harts to follow these great Apostles in true humility.

And now further it is not to be omitted, that with affliction he ioyneth the Kingdome and patience of Christ: seeing it is added as a sweete and comfortable thing, to mitigate the bitterness of persecutions and afflictions. For they that patiently indure and suffer affliction for his names sake, yee know how it is written, that they shall raigne with him. Saint *Iohn* therefore is not ashamed to be a companion in those afflictions, where he hath Christ himselfe a companion: with whom also hee shall be crowned with euerlasting glory. Let vs alwaies consider this, and we shall not be so much afraid to suffer affliction for the gospel. It doth indeed make me base and miserable in outward appearance to the world, when their persecutions and afflictions be sore and grievous: but how full of glory is it to be companions with the blessed Apostles and Martyrs, yea euen with the Lord Iesus himselfe? Moreouer what a goodly thing is it to passe through these light & momentany afflictions into the euerlasting & most glorious kingdome of heauen? these are special things to be thought vpon. In the next words he sheweth the place where he receiued this reuelation, and that was the Ile called *Patmos*. It pleased the holy Ghost to make this cir-
cumstance,

cumstance known touching the place, and therefore it is not in vaine to be noted. Ancient histories doe report that Saint *Iohn* was by the Emperour *Domitian* banished into that Iland, about the yeare of our Lord 96. and there receiued this reuelation: and the next words do seeme manifestly to expresse so much, I meane that he was banished thither for the Gospell, when he sayth, *For the wordes of God, and for the witnessing of Iesus Christ*. It may bee sayd that he was there to preach the word of God; but the phrased seemeth rather to expresse the former sense. The next circumstance is, that he was rapt in the spirite, for thus he is made fit and capable of these heauenly visions: For the spirite which he here speaketh of, saying, *I was in the spirit*, is the holy ghost. If ye read the prophet *Ezechiel*, ye shal find how he saith he was taken vp by the spirite in the visions of God, and caried to Ierusalem. Saint *Paul* was by the spirite taken vp into the third heauen, euen into Paradise, and saw things which could not be vttered, and could not tell whether he were taken vp thither in the body, or whether he were onely in soule taken vp out of the body. And so whether the bodily senses of *Iohn* did cease, his soule rapt for the time, I doe not take vpon me to determine. It is sufficient for vs to know, that he was after a more then ordinary maner rapt in the spirit, & made capable of so heauily visions. Then in the next words the time is noted, when hee sayth it was vpon the Lordes day. It is the day which Saint *Paul* to the Corinthians calleth the first day of the weeke, 1. Cor. 16. in which the assemblies did meete for the holy exercises in religion: which is also euident because hee sayth, They came together that day to breake bread, Acts 20. God created the world and all things therein in fixe dayes, and rested the seuenth, wherefore he blessed the seuenth day and hallowed it: Hee appoynted the seuenth daye for the holy exercises in the publike assemblies. There was somewhat in that Sabbath ceremoniall, as it appeareth plainly by the words of the Prophet *Ezechiel*, where the Lord sayth, *I gaue you my Sabbaths to be a signe betweene you and me, that I the Lord doe sanctifie you*: and also by the words of Saint *Paul* which sayth, *The Sabbaths and festiual daies were shadowes of things to come*. The holy Apostles therefore euen by the scriptures, and by the direction of the holy Ghost did change the day, and chose for the holy assemblies the next day vnto it following, vpon which day our Sauiour rose from the dead. The cauill of the Papists here is vaine and frivolous, affirming that the Apostles had no scripture to warrant this nor any commandement we reade of, but did change the day, not onely otherwise then was obserued, but plainly otherwise then was prescribed by God himselfe in the commandement, seeing God commaunded precisely that the seuenth day, and not the eight should be kept holy. How wickedly would they drawe from hence a power in the Church to abrogate things that are commaunded by God in the scriptures, and to establish things not commaunded by the same? for they faile in these two things, the first that they see not how the obseruation of the Sabbath so farre as it was ceremoniall, was by the scriptures to be abrogated. The second, that the holy Apostles were led by the holy Ghost to deliuer all doctrine to the Church: and the Church since hath the holy Ghost not in such measure, not to haue power to abrogate any ordinance set to be perpetuall, nor to teach any new things, but to knowe
and

and to continue in the doctrine of the Apostles. For as our Sauiour preached all the whole Gospell, as hee sayth, *All thinges that I haue heard of my father, haue I made knowne vnto you*. Iohn 15. verse 15. so hee sent downe the holy Ghost vpon the Apostles which led them into all truth, Ioh. 16. vers. 13. This comforter did bring all things to their remembrance whatsoeuer he had sayd vnto them, Iohn 14. 26. And so the holy Apostles euen as Saint *Paul* witnesseth of himselfe, Acts 20. vttered all the whole counsels of God. In so much that hee is bolde, and sayth, if an Angell from heauen preach any other Gospell vnto you beside that wee haue preached, let him be accursed; Galath. 1. If hee had not preached all the doctrine of the Gospell, how shuld he say if any preach beside that we haue preached? If he had sayd against that we haue preached, it had not beene so much as to say, beside that we haue preached: for they may say and cauill that their doctrine is not against or contrary to that which the Apostles preached, but if it bee added, is it not beside? and it is to be knowne that the Papists of Rhemes doe themselves translate it, beside that I haue preached.

Further that they say this day is called the Lords day, and from ancient time, yea euen from the Apostles, and that to call it sunday, is an heathenish calling, they say right: but then why doe not they consider that the calling it sunday was not onely taken vp in popery, as the rest of the dayes of the weeke, (in which for my part I am not scrupulous) but also if any that professe the Gospell call it the Lords day: the popish sort among vs haue them by and by in derision. I trust they will doe it no longer, if they knowe that the Iesuites say it is an heathenish calling, to call it sunday. Thus much for the time.

Now followeth the calling of Saint *Iohn*, and authorising of him by commandement vnto this speciall busines. He is indeede first called vpon, and receiueh commandement by a voyce, not seeing any thing. For hee heard (as hee sayth) behinde him a great voyce, as it had beene of a trumpet: no doubt there was some cause why this goodly loud voyce is vttered behind him, to stirre him vp before hee saw any vision, but I will not stand about coniectures. Then he telleth what the voyce spake, *I am Alpha and Omega, that first, and that last*. This is to let him vnderstand of what authority he is that calleth him, and appoynteth him to this worke: for that is a chief point, & a thing necessary for him to know. He is indeed the eternal god, the second person in the Trinity, euen the Lord of all Lords: for who but eternall God is *Alpha*, and *Omega*, the beginning and the ending? And the great God alone hath authority to call ministers of his worde, and to deliuer matters vnto them, for the instruction and saluation of his people. If they bee not called by his appoyntment, and to bring his word, what authority haue they, who need to care for them, or what they say? This is a strong place against the most damnable heresie of the wicked Arrians, which affirme that our Sauiour is God, but not eternall God. They ascribe vnto him a secondary godhead which tooke beginning. We see it most euident by that which followeth, that it is Iesus which here appeareth, for hee sayth, *I am alife, and was dead*. Iesus as a man dyed, and as eternall God he sayth, *I am Alpha, and Omega, that first, and that last*. If hee were not the same God with the
Father

Father and the holy Ghost, how should he be the first and the last? Doe not doubt then of his eternall deity. Let vs proceed.

Here followeth what commaundement the voyce vttered, which consisteth of two partes. The first willet him to write in a booke that which he seeth: then the other is that he should send it to the Churches: because the Lord would haue it remaine in perfect record vnto the vse of the whole Church, euen to the worlds end; he willet it should be written in a booke. The papists to vpholde their kingdome, because the written word is against them, boast of vnwritten verities, and traditions, which they say are things so mysticall, that the Apostles would not commit them to writing, nor make them common to all the people, but deliuered them vnto some fewe chiefe persons, that they from one to one might deliuer them to others which should succeed. Here they must bring in their hallowing of Altars, baptizing of bels, and a thousand suchlike trumperies. But if any thing had beene to be kept secret indeede from the common sort, and therefore not to bee deliuered in writing, it might seeme to be the mysticall things vttered in this prophetic: but the Lord will haue them written in a booke, and not onely that, but the other part of the commaundement is, that he should send it to the seuen Churches which are in Asia, vnto Ephesus, and vnto Smyrna, and vnto, &c. He doth not will him when hee hath written it to keepe it close, or to sende it vnto the Bishop of Rome, that hee might haue the custodie thereof, to deliuer to his Cleargie: but hee must send it to the whole Church, and vnto all the members of the vniuersall Church, which is represented by these seuen, and which from these seuen was for al particular Churches to receiue the true copies thereof, to the end that whosoeuer would be blessed might read & heare the words of this prophetic, & keep the things which are writtē herein.

Now hee commeth to set forth the vision, which consisteth of the description, partly of him that appeareth, and giueth him charge for this worke: and partly in the resemblance of the Churches and their ministers. Here is indeede a wonderfull goodly description of Christ Iesus our high Priest and chiefe Pastor, and king, exercising at the right hand of God his kingly and pastorall office, with great glory, wisdom, & power, to the good of his chosen, and to the subduing and vter destruction of his enemies. We see how the Gospell by the foure Euangelists describeth him while hee was vpon the earth, both before and after his resurrection, euen vnto the day that he ascended vp into the heauens: but how he is in the heauens is not there set forth, but here is shewed in vision vnto *John*. It may delight vs to haue his glory in some manner resembled, though we be not able to comprehend the same, no not by many degrees, as it is in the fulnes. Then in this place beholde such a representation thereof shewed to *John* in view, and vttered to vs in words, as no colours can serue to paint out. He did not appeare thus while he preached vpon earth, but tooke vpon him the shape of a seruant, *Philip. 2.* yet in his second comming at the last day to iudge the quicke and the dead, he will come indeede in this glory. The enemies that then despised him, because he was base in shewe, and which now despise him, because they see him not, shal at that day, when this glory shall appeare, not despise him. But let vs examine the particulars: *John* sayth he turned him to see

the

the voyce: And when he was turned, he sawe seuen golden candlestickes, and in the middest of them one like to the son of man. Then the first thing is this, our Lord Iesus appeareth in the middest of the seuen golden candlestickes. The golden candlestickes are expounded by the Lord himselfe, that we may haue a certainty in the exposition, to be Churches: and I will speake more of them when we come to that exposition. Here we are to note thus much by them, that our Lord Iesus is continually in the middest of his Church here vpon earth. In deepe hee hath but one Church, or one spouse, but there be many particular Churches, as members of the same, and to shewe that he is in deed with the vniuersall and with all the members thereof; hee appeareth in the middest of the seuen here named, which represent all other particular assemblies and faithfull members. Hee is in deepe touching his manhood ascended vp aboue the heauens, and the heauens must containe him vntill the time of the restoring of all things, *Acts 2.* and he must come downe euen as he went vp, *Acts 1.* Hee is not now by his bodily presence in the earth, no not inuisibly as the Papists would haue it in the sacrament: for that destroyeth the truth of his humanitie, and maketh the properties of the humane nature, and of the Deitie to be all one, as to be inuisible or insensible, and to bee in all places both of heauen and earth at once. And if men receiue the very flesh or humane nature of Christ otherwise then after a spirituall manner, they must needes also receiue the very essence of the diuine nature with the same, which draweth with it horrible and most execrable blasphemies. For will they separate the Godhead and the manhood in Christ? will they bee so blasphemous as to say a man may receiue his manhood euen corporally, and not together therewith his Godhead, as being but one person? or will they bee so absurd as to say, that a man may receiue with the manhood the very essence of the Deitie, and not bee deified, which is the diuelish blasphemie of those that be of the family of loue? For they say men be deified well although we receiue the very flesh and bloud of our Sauour in the Sacrament but mystically, and after a spiritual and heauenly manner, which is aboue our capacity to comprehend: and so touching his bodily presence he is remoued farre from the earth: yet after an other sort he is alwayes present here below. And so he sayd to his Apostles, *Behold I am with you alway, euen to the end of the world, Math. 28.* Hee defendeth, he comforteth, hee feedeth his Church: hee performeth all things which belong to the office of the great shepheard. In very deepe all other shepheards are but his instruments by which he worketh, he himselfe doth all in all: he seeketh vp that which goeth astray, he feedeth the hungry, he comforteth and supporteth the feeble and weake, he bridleth the froward: hee repelleth the wolfe, and euery rauening beast that would deuour the tender lambs of his flocke. For as we shall see by this vision, he is in the middest of his flocke, not weake, nor idle. How then doth the Pope of Rome boast as though Christ were absent, and had left him in his stead, as his Vicar, committing his whole office and authority into his hands? and looke what he sayth, it must be taken as equall in authority with that which Christ hath sayd. Hee sayth he is the head of the Church in Christs absence: but we see here that our Lord Iesus reigning in glory at the right hand of his Father, is so present with his Church,

that

that he worketh all, and needeth not to haue a vicar. The Pope in deede is a vicar, but as wee shall see afterward in this booke, and that most manifest, not by humane coniecture, but by cleere testimonie of Gods spirite, hee is not the vicar of Christ, but the vicar of the diuell: the dragon giueth him his throne, &c. For albeit the diuell is not absent, yet he hath a vicar, because hee cannot worke well without one, vnto whom he may giue his place, his throne and his authoritie.

Then next hee noteth his attyre, which is a garment downe to the feete, and girded about the brestes with a golden girdle: the Kings vse large and royall robes, and the priestes also at Gods appoyntment by *Moses* in the time of the lawe. This figure then doth represent that hee is among the candlestickes, as our King and Priest: and when they that wore large garments did execute any office (as we may reade of the Priestes in the law) least their garments should hinder, they were gyrded to them with a gyrdle. The garment is here gyrded to Christ with a golden gyrdle: which doth not only represent that hee is in the midst of his Church not idle, but executing his Kingly, and Priestly office, but also that this his worke, is most precious & acceptable to God, as we see the fine golde is vnto men. Looke vp then beloued, our King, and great high Priest, is entred into the most holy place in Heauen, & is at the right hand of God in glory, but yet he is present here below, and executeth his office to our saluation; for beholde he is in his robes gyrded vnto him.

Then next hee saith that his head and hayres were white, as white woll, and as snowe: the white colour in the Scripture dooth sometime represent innocency and purity: sometime heavenly glory, light, and ioye. And so wee see that the holy Angels haue appeared in white rayment, *Matth. 28*. Also Christ transfigured vpon the mounte, hath his garments white, *Matth. 17*. But here it is spoken of the head and hayres, and therefore doth rather represent his full and ripe knowledge and wisdom to performe all things in his Church: for the ancient in dayes haue wisdom and knowledge, and their hayres and heads growe whiter, as they waxe older. The Lord God appearing in vision vnto *Daniel*, chap. 7. vers. 9. The hayres of his head were as pure woll. The figure in this place dooth represent the same thing with that in *Daniel. 7*. In deede touching this figure, wee must not extend it further then vnto one poynt: for olde men by the multitude of dayes gather wisdom: they bee white headed if they waxe exceeding old, now to represent a full ripenes of wisdom, the vision is with head and hayres as white as white woll, and as snowe. But thus it holdeth not, that as by the number of dayes, naturall heate decaying in men, they grow feeble, and their hayres waxe white, so God should also waxe olde: for there is no change nor waxing old in God, nor in Iesus Christ, nor no increase of wisdom in the deitie by any experience.

Then further hee saith, his eyes were as a flame of fire: the fire (as wee knowe) is very quicke and pearcing to passe through all things, and also goeth with cleere light, which expelleth darkenes, and discouereth things that lye hid: and for that cause is here vsed to represent the pearcing sight of our Lorde Iesus Christ, from which nothing can lye hid, no not euen in the darke corners in the world, nor in the deepest secrets of mens harts. His eyes behold all things, both in the good and

in

in the bad: all things are naked and open vnto his eyes, with whom wee haue to doe, *Hebrew. 4. vers. 13*. The sincere godly man is often accused and condemned to be an hypocrite, by the corrupt malice of men which are blinde: but his eyes be as a flame of fire, he seeth the intents of the hart, and knoweth the desires of his seruants, not caried awry with the sinister opinion that the world hath of them. The glorying and glosing hypocrite making outwardly a notable shewe, and highly commended of men, being but as a painted sepulchre, fayre and bewtifull without, and within full of rottennes and dead bones, cannot lie hid from his eyes. The crafty enemies in their secret counsels, which they take against the poore innocent lambes of Christ, and in their deepe dissembled pollicies how to intrappe and destroy them, are in deede often farre remoued from the sight of the wisest men: but his eyes are as a flame of fire, he seeth them all well enough. The diuels in hell can deuise nothing against his seruants, but it is euident to his sight. As this may terrifie all tyrants and hypocrites, so may it comfort all the godly exceedingly, and encourage them to flye vnto him, and to depend vpon him in all distresses.

Then followeth that his feete like vnto fine brasie burning in a furnace. This declareth not onelie the perfection of his waies, but also his mighty and inuincible power to tread downe all his enemies: for the kinde of brasie which his feete are likened vnto, is of a merueilous shining colour, especially when it is burning in a furnace. Such is the excellent purity and brightnes of his wayes. But why then is not this represented by the finest and purest gold, which of all mettals doth excell? The cause here, as also in *Daniel 10*, is euident, that such a mettall is chosen as besides the brightnes, is also very hard and strong, to represent as I saide, the power which he hath to tread downe all his enemies: for he shall make all his enemies his footestoolle, *Psal. 110*. If the most fine golde were equall in shining colour with this kinde of brasie, yet gold is a softe bowing metall, and not so fitte to represent his inuincible strength. He is of might in deede to overthrow all the mightiest, and to deliuer his. It also setteth forth his might, that he saith his voyce is like to the sound of many waters. How the great nations haue been called and subdued vnto him by his mighty voyce, I will not stand to rehearse. Here are yet some partes of this goodly description remayning: as first that hee had in his right hand seuen starres. The starres are the Angels of the Churches, for so the Lord himselfe expoundeth it in the last verse of this chapter, where we will speake more of them: but here wee may note that Christ in feeding and guiding his Church, vseth the ministry of men. For least any should gather by this vision, vpon this that Christ as King and Prophet is present, and worketh al in his Church, that the ministry should be in vaine, this figure is set forth, that in deede he worketh all, but he worketh by the ministrie of men. And how readily men despise the ministrie of the Gospell, imagining a safetie without the same, we haue too much experience: but if thou wilt haue the right hand of the Lord Iesus to worke vpon thee, to frame thee vnto an holy temple, or to fashion thee to be a liuing stone in the temple, or if thou wilt be defended by him from all spirituall euill, submit thy selfe vnto the ministrie of the Gospell, for thou seest the starres bee in his right hand, hee worketh by them. To the same purpose

purpose also it is set downe, *That out of his mouth went a two edged sword.* The word of God is called the spirituall sword, Ephes. 6. and it is sharper then any two edged sword, Hebrew. 4. he worketh with this, the starres and this sword are well set together: for the ministers of the Church are to doe all, both in feeding and governing only by that word which proceedeth out of his mouth. They can doe nothing without it, they are to meddle with none other word, in the worke of the ministry, there is none other word that hath power and authority. The Church of Rome boasteth much of the power and authority of her word: but if it come not out of Christs mouth, it hath no power, neither are they his ministers which deale by a word which is not his. Whose word it is or whose doctrine, his ministers they bee that teach it: if it bee the doctrine of Antichrist, euen the doctrine of diuels, then are they the ministers of Antichrist, and the seruants of the diuell that teache it; as they be Christs ministers which faithfully vse this two edged sword, that commeth out of his mouth. I know the Pope, and all papists doe boast, that their word is the word of Christ: but when they can shew that it came out of his mouth, that it is to be found in the writings of the holy Apostles and Prophets (which haue vttered all that came out of his mouth) wee will beleue them. Wee knowe that whatsoeuer doctrine commeth not from his mouth, (as all that is not contained in the holy Scriptures) it commeth out of the mouth of the dragon. Lastly, Saint *Iohn* expresseth the wonderfull brightnes of his face, for he saith it did shine as the sunne shineth in his strength, that is, when the sunne shineth cleere: for when the sunne riseth, commonly the thicke vapors which are neere the earth betwene vs and it while it is lowe, doe dimme the beames thereof, and so when it goeth downe, then our eyes can in some sorte stedfastly behold and looke vpon it. Sometime also the ayre being ouercast with some thicke mist, wee may looke vpon the sunne, euen at noone when it is at the highest. But when it is at the highest, euen at midde daye, and the ayre cleere in deede, then doth it shine in the full strength, and then is no mortall eye able to behold it stedfastly. Such is the brightnes of his face. The Prophet *Dauid* prayeth; Psalm 4. Lorde lift vp the light of thy countenance vpon vs. The whole Church also in the Psalm prayeth, shew vs the light of thy countenance, and we shall be safe. The light of his countenance is with ioy and comfort, expelling all darkenes and sorrow: this bright countenance of Christ, comforteth and lighteneth the whole Church.

Thus we see what a glorious, mighty, and most wise King, and high Priest the Church hath, who is alwaies present with her, working effectually her saluation by his liuely word and ministers, treading downe her enemies, and shining most comfortably vpon her. Now it followeth how *Iohn* could not indure the sight of this vision, vntill he was strengthened by the Lord: for when he saw him hee fell at his feet as dead: there was as it were no spirite left in him. The Prophet *Daniel* was in the like case at the sight of the vision which hee had, chap. 10. This glory of Christ doth not lift vp Saint *Iohn* into any pride, that he is admitted to see his Lord in such maiesty, but contrariwise it dooth humble him euen to the ground, in as much as by it hee findeth his owne weakenes and imperfection, not capeable of

such

such a sight so farre as to indure it.

It was no doubt profitable, or as I may say, needful, that the holy seruant of Christ should thus be humbled and made fit to receiue this reuelation with the greater reuerence from his great Lord and master: but yet it was chiefly for vs, as it appeareth in that every part of this vision is rehearsed in the epistles to the Churches. Wee see not Christ with bodily eyes, wee can not conceiue the greatnes of his glorie, and that boldeneth vs to despise, and to disobey the wordes that come from him. Such a shew therefore, and representation of his glorie, is needfull for vs. Now he comforteth & confirmeth him, partly by signe, & partly by words, that he might not be afraid. The signe is this, whē he saith, *He layd his right hand vpon me.* The laying on his right hand signifieth that hee is his protectour: yea all this power and maiestic is for the good of the Church. Wo be to the deuils, and to all the wicked tyrants, that Christ Iesus is so mighty; they shall tremble and quake at it indeede: but let the Church reioyce, for with his right hand and strong arme, he is her defendor. And let it not dismay vs that *Iohn* is so terrified at the sight of Christ, for hee was not yet fully perfected: *For when this mortall hath put on immortalitie*, 1. Cor. 15. and wee shall bee quiterid of all infection and diseases both in body and soule: then shall the beholding of the king in his glorie be most comfortable vnto vs, which was yet thus terrible vnto *Iohn*. Then follow his words, *Feare not, I am that first, and that last, &c.* Shall *Iohn* feare, or shall the Church feare at this high maiestic? nay it is that which must comfort and deliuer vs from all dread, that our redeemer is so mighty, as both the vision, and his words here doe set forth. Iesus Christ is not onely God, but God euerlasting, and before all eternitie, for he saith, *I am that first, and that last.* With this eternall Deitie, the manhood is also in such sort vnited, that together they make but one person: For the same which saith, *I am that first, and that last*: saith also, *I am aliue, but I was dead, &c.* The diuine nature could not suffer nor die; the humane nature had beginning, & was not that first, but yet being so vnited, he that is first and last, is aliue and was dead. All power is from the godhead, (it is the spirite that quickneth, the flesh profiteth nothing, *Iohn* 6. and the second man is the Lord from heauen, 1. Cor. 15.) but because the children are partakers of flesh and bloud, he also tooke part with them, that he might destroy through death, him that had the power of death, that is the deuill, *Hebr.* 2. vers. 14. hee tooke our nature then that he might die, and by death ouercome the deuill and all the power of death and hell, and deliuer his captiues. In that he was dead and is aliue, yea liueth for euermore, death is swallowed vp into victorie, 1. Cor. 15. In that he dyed (as the same Apostle saith) he died once to sinne; but in that he liueth, he liueth to God, *Rom.* 6. vers. 10. Behold (saith the Lord Iesus here) *I am aliue for euermore, Amen.* He willet vs to behold, as a very speciall thing, and then ratifieth it with this word, *Amen.* For in that he liueth for euermore, his kingdome and priesthood are eternall, as it is written, *Thou art a Priest for euer, after the order of Melchisedech*: Psalm. 110. This is necessary, and comfortable to bee knowne as a thing most surely confirmed and ratified vnto vs: because vpon it dependeth the perfect saluation of the whole Church. For thus saith the holy Ghost, *This man because*

he

he endureth euer, hath a priesthood which cannot passe from one to another. Wherefore he is able also perfectly to saue them that come vnto God by him, seeing hee euer liueth to make intercession for them. Heb. 7. ver. 24. & 25. This setteth forth the great glory of his eternall priesthood, and for the power of his kingdome, marke what he sayth in the next words: *And I haue the keyes of hell and of death.* The keyes in the holy scripture are put for the rule, and power, and authoritie, which he hath that is made high steward in an house, or in a kingdome, to order and dispose all things as hee shall see good. Looke in Isay chap. 22. where the Lord threatneth *Sebna*, that he would remoue him, and that he would set *Eliachim* in his place to haue the rule ouer the house of the king of Iuda, and ye shall find it expressed in this maner: *I will put the key of the house of Dauid vpon his shoulder, he shall open, and none shall shut, he shall shut, and no man shall open.* The Lord Iesus Christ is set at the right hand of God the Father almighty, all rule and power is committed into his hand in heauen and earth, Math. 28. and therefore he sayth in the third chapter of this booke, speaking of himself, that he hath the key of *Dauid*, that he openeth and no man shutteth, that he shutteth & no man openeth. This expresseth his soueraignty ouer the whole church which is the house of *Dauid*, into which they be receiued in, and they be shut out, whom he will. He saueth, and he punisheth, & none can resist him: he commaundeth, and he forbiddeth, and none may gainsay. In this place to take away all feare not onely from *Iohn*, but from all his chosen, hee sayth, *I haue the keyes of hell and of death.* For if hee haue the lordship ouer hell it selfe, and ouer death, they can hurt vs no longer, wee neede not to feare. As hee that winneth a defended citie, taketh the keyes, openeth and shutteth: so Christ hauing vanquished death and hell, euen all the infernall powers, in their strong hold, keepeth the keyes, and none of his shall be hurt: and as for his enemies, euen Satan and all his angels, and all the wicked, he will shut them vp in hell, and punish them for euer. Thus hauing confirmed and comforted *Iohn*, both by laying his right hand vpon him, and by his speech, he commaundeth him againe to write this reuelation. And we may note, that he deuidenth it into these three partes, *The things which thou hast seene, the things which are, and the things which shall come hereafter.* Hee had then scene that glorious vision of the mightie sonne of God appearing in the midst of the seuen golden candlestickes, which he according as he was commanded, committed to writing, euen euery particular: for the vision was not for him alone, but for the whole Church, that we may know what manner of one he is from whom this reuelation doth come. This is the first branch.

Then the second is, the things which are: and those bee contained in the two next chapters, the second and the third. For there is the state of the seuen Churches of Asia layd open, in which they were at that present, that by them (as I sayd before) wee may vnderstande in what estate the whole Church militant was at that time. Saint *Iohn*, according to this commandement, hath written vnto euery one of them seuerally, that message which the Lord committed vnto him. Then ye may see the second branch, which is, the things that are.

Now the third is, the things which shall come hereafter: and that is all things opened

pened in this booke forehewed to come, and to be fulfilled euen to the end of the world. He left out nothing of that was shewed him: he added nothing more then was shewed him: he was a right faithfull seruant of the Lord. And for our part we must receiue euery thing written in this book, as from the mouth of our great Lord and master, neither adding thereunto, nor taking therefro. Wee must receiue this booke, will some say, but how can wee vnderstand it? Is not the interpretation of it doubtfull? because things darke and mysllicall may bee taken diuers wayes, and men follow some one sense, and some an other, as seemeth most like vnto them. Nay if we haue not an vndoubted certaintie for the sense and meaning of this booke, we are neuer the nearer. That is it which the Papists would driue vs vnto: but behold the great goodnes, the great kindnes of the Lorde, which will not haue vs follow coniectures or reasons of men, and therefore himselfe expoundeth the darkest and the most mysllicall things, at the least so many of them, and so farre, as the rest are thereby layd open and made manifest: As here hee expoundeth the mystic of the seuen starres, and of the seuen golden candlestickes: whereby wee vnderstand the vision, and all that is written in the two next chapters to the seuen Angels of the seuen Churches. Can any man then doubt any longer, or call it into question, when the Lord himselfe hath giuen the signification? Let vs see then what is signified by the figure of the seuen stars in his right hand, and by the seuen golden candlestickes. *The mystic of the seuen starres which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seuen golden candlestickes is this: The seuen starres are the Angels of the seuen Churches, and the seuen candlestickes are the seuen Churches.* Is not this euident enough, that the starres doe represent and signifie the Pastours and Teachers of the Churches, which teach the Gospell of Christ? and the candlestickes are the Churches. Indeed Angels are most vsually taken for heauenly spirites which are about the throne of God, but as the priest is called the Angell of the Lord of hostes, Malach. 2, so the ministers of the Gospell are called Angels here. If any man shall say, how is that out of all controuersie? I answer, it is so euident and past all doubt, that the Iesuities which would faine set vp the patronage of Angels, are constrained to confesse that in this place the Angels of the Churches are not the heauenly spirites, as it is manifest, say they, and therefore must needs signifie the Priests or Bishops, &c. But shal we take it from them to bee manifest, because they say so? Nay I alleadge them to this purpose, that they seeking to deprau al things, this is so manifest to bee the pastors of the Churches, that they cannot deprau it, or wrest it. For reade the two next chapters, and ye shall see that almost euery one of these seuen Angels is reproued for some fault or other, which can not bee in the heauenly Angels, for they bee without al fault. Ye see these are willed to repent, and threatned if they do not, and therefore they be men.

Ye may see also that the vertues commended in them, and the vices rebuked do in deede concerne the worke of the ministerie. Then why are the ministers of the Gospell called starres? because as the starres doe shine from heauen, so the ministers of Christ, the true ministers of the Gospell, doe shine and giue light vnto men by heauenly doctrine, and godly conuersation of life. The popish prelates challenge

to be these stars, being in deede nothing lesse, teaching their owne inuentions, and resisting the true heavenly light of the Gospell. Why doe these starres in this vision appere in Christs right hand? because he worketh, he buildeth, and hee preferreth his Church by them: for howsoeuer the worke of the ministry seemeth a base and contemptible thing vnto the blind world; yet is it a thing most precious, seeing the ministers bee the instrumentes of Christs right hand, by which hee bringeth his Church vnto eternall glory. Woe be to them that degenerate from so high a dignity, and from so precious a worke: but blessed are they which be found faithfull: for though the proude worldlings despise them, their honour is with God, and with our Lord Iesus Christ.

And now for the Churches, why are they resembled by golden candlesticks? Touching the metall gold is precious, so that wee are hereby giuen to vnderstand how precious the Churches be before the Lord. There be in deede many infirmities, yea deformities in the true members of the Church, and we are base in sundry respects, which causeth many euen to loath and despise: but wee must learne to esteeme the Church as the Lord esteemeth it, euen precious as gold, not looking vpon the present estate which it is in here vpon the earth, but when he shall make it to himselfe a glorious Church, not hauing spot or wrinkle, Ephes. 5. vers. 27. Maruell not then that the candlestickes be of gold, for how precious and deare is that vnto him, which hee bought and purchased with his owne blood? Some esteeme true christian people, especially if they bee poore, euen as much as they doe ragges: I would they did vnderstand this vision of the golden candlestickes.

Then further, why are the Churches resembled by candlestickes? Because as the candlestick doth not giue the light, but the light is put vpon it, and it beareth vpon the light: so the Church receiueth all her light put vpon her from Christ, shee shineth with light, but not her owne, the whole doctrine is from God, and not of men, the heavenly light doth remayne in her and vpon her onely. This is the cause why Saint *Paul* calleth the Church, the pillar and ground of truth, 1. Timoth. 3. vers. 15. No man can be partaker of the true heavenly light, except he abide in the Church. There is the onely candlestick which beareth the light: seeke therefore to bee of the true Church. And that Church which taketh vpon her not to be a candlestick,

but to giue light of her owne, yea to make her owne decrees equall or aboue the word of God (as the Church of Rome) flye from

it, it is the synagogue of Sathan. Thus
much for these wordes of
this first vision.



The fourth Sermon.

CAP. 2.

1. To the Angell of the Church which is at Ephesus write, these things saith hee that holdeth the seuen starres in his right hand, and that walketh in the midst of the seuen golden candlestickes.
2. I know thy workes, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not beare with them that are euill, and hast examined them which say they are Apostles and are not, and hast found them liars.
3. And thou wast burdened, and hast patience, and for my names sake hast labored, and hast not fainted.
4. Neuerthelesse I haue somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first loue.
5. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and doe the first workes, or else I will come against thee shortly, and will remoue thy candlestick out of his place, except thou amend.
6. But this thou hast, because thou hatest the workes of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate.
7. Let him that hath an eare, heare what the spirite saith to the Churches: to him that ouercommeth will I giue to eate of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.



Aint *John* (as we haue seene in the former chapter) was commaunded by the Lord, to write that hee saw, and to send it to the seuen Churches of Asia, which are there named. And now being to foreshew the state of the Church, hee beginneth first with these seuen Churches themselues. For here is to euery one of them severally, a seuerall epistle or message, sent from the Lord, in which their estate which they were then in, is laide open. In these same messages, there be many excellent things set

downe for our instruction, which require our diligent obseruation. For there is not onely laide open in what estate the said Churches were at that time: but also wee shall finde what things the Lord praiseth and commendeth in the ministers of his Church, and in all Christians, likewise what hee disalloweth and condemneth. Moreouer wee shall see admonitions and threatnings, also very great and precious promises.

But let vs handle the words in order as they be set downe: The first message is sent

sent to the Angell of the Church of Ephesus, for that was the chiefe citie of Asia, and by all likelyhoode there was the greatest and the most populous Church of these seuen. But how is it, that where he commaunded him before to write to the seuen Churches, now he willeth him to write but to the Angels, that is, to the pastors and teachers of the same Churches, as here to the Angell of the Church of Ephesus, and so in all the rest? We must know, for to answer this, that writing to the pastors, he excludeth not the Churches, but in very deepe in them or vnder them he writeth to the whole Churches. And least any may imagine that this is but mans interpretation, reade the conclusion of euery message, and yee shall finde these wordes, *Let him that hath an eare heare what the spirit saith to the Churches.* He beginneth with the Angels of the Churches, and endeth with this: let him heare what the spirite saith to the Churches: then that which is spoken to the Angell of the Church, is spoken to the Church. What is the reason of this (may some demaunde) that directing the speech but to the Angels of the Churches, yet hee writeth to the Churches, or being to write to the Churches, he nameth but the Angels of those Churches?

It may bee saide, that it was requisite, that the pastors should haue the state of their flockes laide open vnto them, to the end that they might apply the doctrine, and censures of the Church accordingly. This is true, but not all, there is a further cause: And if ye consider that the pastors are commended, and reprobued together with their flockes, so that their owne estate, and the estate of their flockes is laide open to be all one, ye may soone gather what it is. Such shepheards, such flockes, such builders such building: the prayse of the good, and the blame for the euill, lieth vpon the Pastors. God in deepe buildeth his Church, Christ feedeth his flocke, but he doth it by the ministrie of men, as the holy Apostle teacheth, Ephes. 4. There is a great matter depending vpon this ministrie: for if the buylders be wise, if they be expert and carefull, the building goeth vp accordingly, very goodly and fayre.

If the shepheards be full of the spirite of God, if they be full of faith, full of loue, full of zeale, and full of all holy vertues, so that they be patens in holy doctrine and godly conuersation: then their flockes are well instructed, well fed, and well guided: there be very excellent sheepe for knowledge, for faith, for loue, for zeale, and for all godlines. Contrariwise, if the builders bee vnskilfull, the building is vnperfect, they doe but marre it: If the shepheards be vnwise, if they be negligent, if they be corrupt, either in doctrine or in manners, the sheepe remaine ignorant, the sheepe are weake and feeble.

And further, as the shepheards increase in graces, the sheepe increase (for God powreth forth his graces vpon the flockes by his ministers) they bee the vessels in which the treasure is brought, 2. Cor. 4. vers. 7: As the shepheards decay and waxe colde, the sheepe goe backward and waxe colde with them, such as the bottle vpon the fire cooleth as the fire slaketh.

Meruaile not then that the Lord opening the state of the Churches, doth it by opening the estate onely of their pastors and teachers. Here is a lesson for the ministers of the Gospell, and here is also a lesson for the people; the ministers and pe-

ple must consider what a waight lieth vpon their shoulders: if they performe the things which are required at the hands of Christs true ministers, they shall (as Saint Paul saith of *Timothie*, cap. 4. v. 14. 15. 16.) saue themselves, and those that shall heare them. So likewise on the contrary part, if the pastors bee vnskilfull, corrupt and negligent, they destroy the flockes. Where there be good things in the shepheards, they flow forth vpon the whole flockes; and where there be euill things in them, they infect and destroy the sheepe.

Let no man thinke that this is to ascribe too much on both sides vnto men: but reade what S. Paul writeth, 1. Cor. 3. vers. 9. *For wee together are Gods laborers, yee are Gods husbandrie, and Gods building.* He compareth (as yee see) the Church vnto tyllage, as also vnto a building, and the ministers they be the workmen that till and dresse the ground, and that frame & fit the stones, and couple them in the building. Now we must needs confesse, that it is almighty God alone, that maketh the corne to growe, but yet if the husband man doe not plow, and harrow, and sowe, and weede, what haruest will there follow? The husband man is Gods instrument to bring forth the fruites of the earth. In like manner it is saide of the Lords spirituall haruest, *Paul hath planted, Apollo hath watered, but God gaue the increase*, 1. Cor. 3. vers. 6. If there be none to till, to dresse, to plante, to water, what increase, or what haruest shall there bee vnto the Lord? If any will saye, God is able to saue without the ministry of men: So is he able to make the corne grow without the labours of the plow man. But we are not to looke what he is able, but what he hath ordayned and appoynted to bee. I may say likewise for the other similitude, it is written: *Except the Lord build the house, their labour is lost that build it.* But yet if the Carpenter, and Mason, doe not hew, and square the tymbre, and the stones, what building shall wee haue? Would to God that all that haue the roomes, and occupie the places of Bishops and pastors in the Church, would well and thoroughly consider this.

And for that lesson which the people are here to learne, it is this: euen to see what a singular blessing of almighty GOD it is, to haue godly and skilfull pastors, and wise builders. And what a plague and curse it is on the other side, to haue such as be naught: for bee they not left as ground vtilld, and as stones and timber not hewne for the Lords building, where they haue naughty ministers? Are they not as sheepe scattered and deuoured of the wilde beastes? Ah poore men how they laugh, and how glad they be, euen many of them, when they see him that should instruct and guide them, ignorant, and wicked in his wayes? As if the matter did not touch or concerne them at all, they know not that the Lord doth in the state of the shepheards, declare also what the flockes be: they know not that it is their owne plague. Thus much for that he saith to the Angell of the Church which is at Ephesus.

Now to the message which he is willed to write; it consisteth (and so doth euery one of the seuen) of three parts: that is to say of the exordium or beginning, of the narration, and of the conclusion. The exordium is taken from the person of him that sendeth, and according to the glory of the vision in which he appeared. These

things sayth he, that holdeth the seven starres in his right hand, and that walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlestickes. Of what authoritie, of what power, maiestie and glorie hee is that holdeth the seven starres in his right hand, and that walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlestickes, the vision doth shew: his eyes as a flame of fire, his feet like vnto fine brasle burning in a furnace, his voyce as the sound of many waters, his face as the sunne shineth in his strength, & so of all the rest. For this one part is to put them in minde of the whole, that they might consider from what an high, mightie, and glorious Lorde, and most wise, the message did come, and so beware that they did not esteeme light of it. For the more excellent the person is that sendeth, the lesse safe it is for me to despise the message which is sent. It might moue sufficiently to say, thus sayth the Lord Iesus sitting at the right hand of God the Father almighty: but we are dull, and therefore he hath in vision set forth some part of his glorie that he reigneth in, and from the maiestie and power of the same sendeth the message. Wee see by this that the vision in which Christ appeared, chap. 1. was not for *Iohn* alone, but for the Churches to whom he sent, yea euen for vs all. Christ our blessed Lord from his glorie, hath sent this booke vnto vs: let vs then receiue and imbrace it with all humblenes of mind, for so it becommeth vs to doe, vnlesse we will set light by so mighty a king. Let not this heavenly vision bee in vaine or fruitlesse, as set forth vnto blockes or stones, which are nothing moued thereby. This for the beginning.

The narration followeth, which in this epistle to the Angell of the Church of Ephesus, hath these seuerall parts. First, he is commended and praised for sundry good things which are exprest in the second and third verse. Then is hee discommended for somewhat wherein hee halted, which is noted in the fourth verse. After that he is admonished to repent, and threatned if he doe not, but the threatning is mitigated, verse the fift and sixt. Now before we handle these things, marke how he sayth, *I know thy works*. This is to put him in mind, yea to put vs all in mind, that the Lord Iesus commendeth and discommendeth, vpon a perfect ground and measure of all actions. For that the praise may be iust, neither too much nor too little, and likewise the dispraise; it is requisite that hee which praiseth and dispraiseth, should know perfectly, how good and how euill all actions or deedes of men bee. Wherefore when he commeth to lay open the state of the Angels of the Churches, to commend and to discommend, he beginneth with this vnto euery one of them, *I know thy works*.

We are readie to nothing more then to praise and dispraise that which we heare and see in our brethren, but for want of perfect knowledge, that wee can not see from what roote euery worke springeth, from what faith, from what loue, from what intent and sinceritie of heart, wee commend and discommend not onely vnperfectly, but also oftentimes vniustly and rashly. We praise a man for his vertues, or discommend him for his faults, either too much or too little: wee commend a man highly for his works, when it may bee they are naught before God, as he doth them: and so wee disallow and discommend often that which is wel done in the sight of God. But our Sauour Iesus Christ, whose eyes are as a flame of fire, and

pearce

pearce through all things, before whom all things lye naked and open, Hebrews 4. who seeth the intents and counsels of all hearts, and will make them manifest, and will bring into light things hid in darkenes, 1. Cor. 4. verse 5. This Lorde, I say, in praising and dispraising, faileth not one iota, or as they say, one haire breadth. All that followeth then touching the praise and dispraise of the Pastors and the Churches, wee must take as a most perfect censure proceeding from him that sayth, *I know thy works*.

This is a great comfort vnto all the true and faithfull seruants of Iesus Christ. For howsoeuer their doings are depraued among men, and they be euill rewarded, yet the prince of Pastors, the Lord Iesus sitting in glorie at the right hand of GOD, is present among them, beholdeth and knoweth most perfectly all their wayes, and will giue them their iust praise and rewarde. This caused Saint *Paule* to set so light to be iudged by mans iudgement, as he professeth, 1. Cor. 4. verse 3. If the negligent, vnskillful, and vngodly shepheards, which seeke but for lucre or glory, would marke these words well, (*I know thy works*) it might strike them as a most terrible thunderbolt. For can they thinke they shall escape his iudgement that knoweth all their works? or doe they imagine it is a light matter to destroy the flocke of Christ? All and euery Christian man ought continually to be mindfull of this, that the Lord sitting in his glory, beholdeth and knoweth all their workes, that so they may indeuour to worke well, to walke vp rightly and faithfully before him, and so to fight the good fight of faith, as that by him they may be crowned.

We bee souldiers in the Lords armie to fight vnder his banner against sinne, the world, and the deuill: when the Emperour in the worldly battailes doth stand and beholde them, how valiantly euery cowarde will then lay on and fight? And shall not we (our Emperour looking vpon vs) fight so in this spirituall battaile, as that he may approue of vs? We shall be rewarded for euery good worke which we doe of a sincere faith and loue towards him, Math. 10. ver. 42. Marke 9. ver. 41. How happy a thing is it then to be rich and plentious in all good works?

Now let vs see what his works were which the Lord sayth he did know, and first those for which he did commend him. Here are sixe vertues, which are euen holy ornaments vnto a faithful shepheard rehearsed by the Lord, and ascribed vnto him: Labor, patience, zeale, wisdom, sinceritie of heart, and heroicall magnanimitie. These be the sixe. I might in some sort haue sayd seuen, because he hath a double commendation for his patience. These vertues doe shewe that he was a very excellent seruant of Christ, especially before this his blemish, when he blameth him that he was somewhat decayed, and had left his former loue: for if he had wanted other things which are by the rules of the worde of God required in a pastor, hee should haue bene blamed for them also: but hee is blamed, onely for some decay in loue. Looke now vpon the vertues which our Lord ascribeth to him.

The first is labor, for he sayth, thy labor. Hee that in the ministrie of the Gospell will follow the steppes of Christ the great shepheard, and the steppes of the blessed Apostles which followe next vnto him, hee must take great paines and labour, hee must not be idle and negligent. For yee may reade in the Euangelistes how Christ

did trauaile from Towne to Towne, and from Citie to Citie, preaching the Gospell of the kingdome, Math. 4. verse 23. We read of the labours and trauailes of Saint Paul, 2. Cor. 11. and what charge he gaue to others, Acts 20. 1. Timoth. 3. 13. 15. 16. 2. Timoth. 4. verse 2. Can a man feede, and guide a flocke of sheepe, and not take paines? and sayth not Christ vnto Peter, Feed my sheepe? Iohn 21. Can the husband-man plow, harrow, sowe, dresse and weede his grounds, but it will cost him great labours? The Church, as Saint Paul sayth, is Gods husbandrie, euen his ground that is to bee tilled and sowed, 1. Cor. 3. verse 9. Can the builders build vp an house and not worke vpon it? The Church in the same place is called Gods building. There is no ground so churlish, so vnfit for feede, and so plentiful in euill weedes, as the hearts of men are without continuall dressing and tilling, vnfitte for heavenly feed, and plentiful in all vices. There is no timber, or stones which aske more labour to hew and to square them, then men doe to bee framed, and made fit to be coupled in the spirituall building. Such then as haue charge ouer soules, and be idle and negligent, spending away their time in vaine pastimes, followe not the steppes of Christ and his Apostles, but destroy and scatter the flocke, lay the Lordes husbandrie waste and ouergrowen with noysome weedes, and pul downe his temple. Doe these men make account that there is any iudgement seate? doe they thinke they shall euer be called to their reckoning? He that will be a true minister of Iesus Christ, he must make account hee hath entred vpon a matter of continuall labour and care: vnlesse hee regarde not what become of the Lords sheepe, of his husbandrie and building.

The second vertue is patience: This is ioyned with labour in the Church, because without it the labours can not be continued. Indeed where a man seeth good successe of his trauaile, it carrieth him on forward to labour sore, euen willingly. But in the Church some bee so dull and slow of capacitie, that they must bee taught as the Prophet Isay sayth, like children new weaned, *Line vnto line, line vnto line, precept vnto precept, precept vnto precept, a little here, and a little there*: Isay 28. yea with great labours they seeme to profite nothing. Some are so vnconstant, fickle, & waivering, that when they are taught, the labours seeme to be but lost, they bee harder to be kept, then they were to be found. Others there bee which are somewhat forward, and if the pastors bee not patient, yea very patient towardes them, they must needes slacken in their care and labours. For these offer oftentimes so great indignitie, by little esteeming, yea euen by misconstruing and deprauing the labors and trauailes which are taken euen of purpose for their good, that if the seruant of God looke but vpon men, he shall thinke he hath the most thanklesse office that may be. It is certaine that he which looketh but vnto men shall neuer indure, but if he looke vp vnto Christ, he shall then proceed with patience. But why will the Lord haue his ministers tryed with so hard a triall? They seeke to saue mens soules, and they take it scornefully.

It is needfull that all men should be humbled, and their patience manifested; but aboue all others the pastors and teachers: which are to shew themselves as patterns and examples for the flockes to follow. They must be examples in pure doctrine

and

and godly conuersation, yea euen in all vertues, then in patience. And if they haue no difficulties to ouercome, no iniuries, no reproches, nor vnkind dealings offered vnto them, how shall they shew themselves examples and patterns of true patience vnto the flockes? It is a great perswasion vnto euery true Christian to be patient in afflictions, iniuries, and hard dealings, that they imitate the Lord Iesus in meeknes and lowlines of mind: but besides this, the pattours and teachers haue this further perswasion to patience, that they therein lead the flockes into the right way, and vnto a very speciall and heavenly vertue. O how good a thing is it to leade men vnto goodnes, both by pure doctrine and good example of life and conuersation? Then despise not the triall of patience.

The third vertue is zeale, contained in these words, *And how thou canst not beare with them which are euill*. This is not the least vertue in a godly shepheard to bee zealous, seeing the great shepheard himselfe whose steppes wee must followe, did abound in feruent zeale. Hee went to Ierusalem, made a whippe with cords, and draue them out that bought and sold in the temple, and ouerthrew the tables of the money changers, and as the holy Ghost sayth, his disciples remembred that it is written, *The zeale of thine house hath eaten me up*, Ioh. 2. vers. 17. The loue he bare to the glorie of his father brought forth a feruent zeale not to indure such pollutions. So it is sayd here of this angel of the Church of Ephesus, that he could not beare with them that are euill.

The deuill seeketh to bring all infamie and reproch vpon the Gospell, hee endeuoureth to defile and corrupt the Church with false doctrine and wicked manners, and for this cause raiseth vp euill men, sendeth them among the flockes of Christes true sheepe, there to spread abroad their filthie poyson. Some of these came to Ephesus, and began to vtter their wares: but this pastor bare such a loue to his flocke, that he could not indure that such euill men should remaine there, but by the censures and power of the Church cast them forth. We may learne by this place how highly it pleaseth our Lord Iesus Christ, that wicked heretikes should not be borne withall in the Christian congregations, lest they seduce with false doctrine, and corrupt with euill manners, and so destroy or defile the Church. Some haue this zeale in derision as a franticke thing, and mocke at it: but in trueth where it is wanting, the euill men are suffered and doe corrupt all. If the gouernours or pastors ouer the Lords flocke haue not zeale, all goeth to wracke: for then are all sorts of euill men borne withall, which pollute, lay waste, and destroy the Church.

It is therefore a thing most requisite in all true ministers of the Gospell to knowe: that the Church is a very precious thing, that therefore they may loue it most tenderly, and so be moued with a feruent zeale not to suffer those things which hurt & corrupt the same. For if they can patiently beare to see the glory of the Lord troden downe, the Gospell despised, and the precious Temple of God polluted, the loue of Christ is not in them: for if they did loue him, they would bee zealous for his sake.

We come now to the fourth vertue for which he is commended, and that is wisdom to discern, to trie and to find out the spirits, which is expressed in these words,

And

And hast examined them which say they are Apostles and are not, and hast found them lyars. Behold then how excellently well qualified this man was to bee a pastor ouer the sheepe of Christ. Hee held the sound knowledge of the trueth, and by the perfect rules thereof, tried out false doctrines. And whereas those euill men, whome hee could not beare withall, being the ministers of Satan, had transformed themselves into the likenes of the ministers of Christ (as Saint Paul sayth) and boasted that they were Apostles sent euen by the Lord himselfe, hee trying and examining their doctrine and behauiour, and purposes by the holy scriptures, found them lyars. A singular good worke.

We see then how this shephard was so wise and skilful in the word of truth, that he was able to defend and preserve his flock from the wolues, though they came neuer so subtilie clothed in sheepes clothing: happie are those flockes that haue such pastors to watch ouer them. But if the watchman be blind and dumbe, who hath committed so precious a charge into his hand; how shall he trie the spirits, and driue the wolues from the flocke? Are there no wolues now, or is the deuill dead? If hee were so bold, & if his instruments were so bold as to thrust in themselves into those excellent Churches which were founded and taught by the Apostles themselves, and euen while the Apostles were yet liuing, how can we perswade our selues that there is no feare of perill, nor care to be taken in these dayes? Durst they encounter with Paul, and dare they not encounter with any now? there were neuer more subtle and bold seducers, more impudent corrupters then be now, and the sheepe of Christ had neuer more neede of skilfull, wise, and zealous pastors to feede them, and to watch ouer them, then in these dayes. The Lord poure forth his spirite vpon the ministerie, guide, and defend his poore sheepe from the iawes of all such rauening wolues.

I noted before that this man hath a double commendation for his patience: for it followeth, *And thou wast burdened, and hast patience*: wee may not take this to be but a bare repetition. But as before he needed patience to goe through with his labours in respect of the Church it selfe, for the causes I shewed touching the dulnes, the inconstancie and frowardnes of many: so here is need of a further patience in respect of those euill men, the false Apostles whom hee could not beare. O how Satan doth storme and rage where his ministers haue the repulse? And how impudent are they against those that foyle them, in deuising and raising vp lies and slanders, reproches and troubles? This pastor could not indure them in the Church to spread their poyson to infect the sheepe of Christ, but he must indure, and doth indure the whole load and burthen of all their lies, reproches, slanders, and raylings. And the Lorde praiseth him, that hee did beare them patiently, for hee sayth, *Thou wast burdened, and hast patience*. Then we learne that the seruants of God must be armed with double patience. Their weake and froward brethren in the Church will trie their patience, the enemies will lay a further load vpon them: they must be armed to goe through all.

The fift vertue for which he is commended is the sincerity, and integrity of his heart in all his labors: these wordes doe set it forth, *And for my names sake hast laboured*.

labored: Then was this man no hyreling, he laboured in feeding and guiding the Church, hee labored in sifting and trying out false teachers and euill men, not in respect of worldly gayne, nor of vaine glory to seeke his owne prayse, but euen (as Saint Paul speaketh of himselfe) constrained by the loue of Christ. The glory of Christ was so precious vnto him, and the saluation of mens soules committed to his charge so deare, that he was thereby euen forced to these labors. And the Lorde which is the high Iudge of all, who knoweth the secrets of all hearts, euen from his glory testifieth vnto this his sincerity, saying, *And for my names sake hast labored*. This is a great prayse, what neede he care if all the world should condemne him? As on the other side, if a man labour neuer so much, and goe through all trauayles of study, of teaching, &c. and that with the highest commendation that may be, what is he the better if this prince of Pastors shall say vnto him, thou hast thy rewarde, thou diddest seeke thine owne prayse and glory, thy hart was set vpon gayne and preferments, and thou hast found them? Here is then a glasse for all the ministers of the Gospell to looke in, and to behold themselves: for we see what a Iudge we haue to deale withall. There is great difference betweene these two, *for my names sake hast labored*, and *for thy bellyes sake thou hast labored*: reade the third chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians, and see what their ende is which minde earthly things.

Now there remaineth but the sixt vertue which is the last, for which this man is prayed: and that is his heroycall magnanimity: The wordes be these, *And hast not faynted*. His burden of labors was great, his troubles many, both in dealing with the flocke, and against the false Apostles (as we haue seene) and yet he stood vnder it with a valiant courage, and neuer faynted: The power of God was in him, or else he could not but haue waxed weary and haue faynted. Such courage as this doth in deede become the ministers of Christ, and very necessarily it is required in them: for they shall bee set vpon on euery side. They must pull downe Satan, hee will roare: if they be faynt-hearted, if they will be made afrayd and terrified at euery blast, they can neuer holde out in the worke. If they will haue peace in the world, they must let alone the building of Ierusalem, nay they must bee at peace with the diuell, and helpe to pull downe Gods trueth. Well, Christ commended this man for his courage and fortitude, that nothing could make him faynt, or waxe weary of all the burthen which was layde vpon him: let all the seruants of God looke vpon his prayse, for it is written for our instruction: that wee may follow the same steppes.

Hetherto he hath been commended, now followeth his dispraise in somewhat, the wordes are these, *Neuerthelesse I haue somewhat against thee*. Then although he were very excellently qualified for the worke of the ministry, yet there is some faulte which the Lorde dooth not conceale, but plainly layeth it open. And what was it? Ye see it set downe, euen in these wordes, *Thou hast left thy former loue*. We may well see by those former vertues that he had not lost the graces of the holy Ghost (as the Papists would proue from hence that the regenerate may fall from grace) but he was somewhat decayed and gone backward in loue: for by naming

ming his former loue, he attributeth a loue vnto him now, but inferiour to the former. For in deede although hee that is borne of God (as Saint *Iohn* saith) sinneth not, neither can sinne, because his seede remayneth in him, and because he is borne of God, 1. *Ioh.* 2. vers. 9. Yet the graces of the spirite may for a time decay in him, or lye smothered, not shewing such force: And that we may see in *David*, and other holy persons.

His and their faulte being thus laid open here followeth first an admonition, in these words, *Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and doe the first workes.* This admonition, as ye see, doth consist of diuers branches, all tending to this, that he might be recovered from his decaye. First, when hee biddeth him remember from whence he is fallen, it sheweth that men doe decline in religion by negligence and forgetfulness of former graces: and the way to recouer, is to be mindefull in what estate we haue been, about that which we are presently in, if we be declined. It teacheth also (by saying from whence thou art fallen) how high they bee lifted vp which loue God and their brethren, how precious a thing loue is before God, that the decay therein, is accounted so great, or so foule a fall. For if it were not a thing of very great price, why should it be said, remember from whence thou art fallen? Yee see how highly Saint *Paul* extolleth loue, 1. *Cor.* 13. And where it is not, all is in vaine, and the decay in it is so much the fowler faulte, because we are taught that we ought to grow and increase, yea more and more to abound therein. Then he willeth him to repent: he being entred into a dangerous course of declining and going backward, the Lorde Iesus the great sheppeheard, who seeketh vp that which is gone astraye, and recouereth that which is ready to be lost, seeketh to heale him by repentance. For when we are awrie, there is no way but to alter our course by repentance, & returne againe into the right way: and that we should not imagine that the repentance is but some affection of the minde that resteth within, he addeth, *and doe the first workes.* If we repent in deede, with the true and vnfayned repentance, wee shall (as *Iohn* Baptist willeth, *Matth.* 3.) bring forth fruites worthy repentance.

O how ready are we, when our harts accuse vs, that wee are fallen or declined in any godly duties, as in zealous and fruitfull profession of the gospel, to rest in some inward tuch thereof in minde, and some confession in speech, and neuer returne to the actions. We are therefore willed here, in the person of this man, so to repent, that we doe the former workes: thou hast been a zealous man in the profession of the gospel, thou hast loued tenderly the glory of God, the gospel of Christ, and the Church, thou hast been ready in actions to aduance the same: thou art now waxen cold, thou doest both confesse it in wordes, and seeme to bewaile it, and to bee sorry for it: take heede thou holde not this enough, but if thou wilt repent in deede, doe the former workes: shall wordes or inward motions serue? Nay, bring forth the fruites of repentance; that is loue in deede and in trueth, where the workes of loue are wrought. But what shall wee say to this that hee requireth of him, to doe but the former workes, were the former so full and perfect that no more could bee required? Saint *Paul* sheweth how hee went still forward, *Philip.* 3. verse 12.

This

This is to be answered, that when the Lord requireth that he should do the former workes, it includeth not a perfection in which hee might lawfully staye, but a proceeding further, for he was in a race in which he was going forward. If a man be out of the way, and then set into it againe, it is that he may goe forward. Do the former workes, thou wert in a good way going forward, now thou goest backward, repent, returne, and goe in the former way. Then here is added the threatening if hee repent not, and if hee returne not to his former loue, and doe the first workes: it is in these wordes, *Or else I will come against thee shortly, and will remoue thy candlesticke out of his place except thou repent.* This is a sore thing, that Iesus Christ will come against him in punishment, if he doe not repent, it sheweth how highly he was displeased with this faulte. If God be on our side, who shall bee against vs? And if he come against vs, who shall be able to rescue or deliuer vs out of his hand, or any way to relieue vs? The punishment threatned is, I will remoue thy candlesticke out of his place. This is not darke or hard to bee vnderstood, because we haue the Lords owne exposition: *The seven golden candlestickes, are the seven Churches.* Here then Christ threatneth the Church at Ephesus, that if there follow not repentance, both in their pastor and in them, he will remoue his Church from thence, and they shall remayne his Church no longer.

Wee knowe the parable of the vineyard let forth to husband men which would not render the fruites of it, as our Sauour telleth, *Matth.* 21. And how it is sayde the vineyard should be taken from them, & let to other husband men, which will render to him the fruites in due season: And then how he expoundeth it plainly, *The Kingdome of God shall be taken from yee, and giuen to a nation that will bring forth the fruites thereof.* The Lord doth not threaten to breake the candlesticke, but to remoue it vnto another place: for hee neuer destroyeth his Church, but when his Gospell is abused in one place, he remoueth it to an other; as when the Iewes were obstinate, it was taken from them, and giuen to the gentiles: and these Churches of Asia here named, and many other famous Churches haue long since been miserably oppressed, and laide waste by the cruell enemy the Turke. We see then it is a sore threatening, euen to terrifie them from backsliding, and that they might seeke to recouer themselves from decay, vnto their former estate.

Here is in deede a glasse for vs all to looke in: and the Lord of his tender compassion open our eyes that we may in it behold ourselves. First, let the ministers of the gospel consider what a meruailous waight is laid vpon their shoulders, in that the Angell of this Church hauing left his former loue, the whole flock is threatned: why is it, but that they with him were gone backe, and had forsaken their former loue? If they in his declining had not declined with him, why should it bee sayde, I will come against thee shortly, and will remoue thy candlesticke out of his place, except thou repent? Should they all be threatned, if they were not in fault? The pastors then, the teachers, the guides and sheppeheards ouer the Lorde's flocke, had neede to be carefull, yea very carefull that they decaye not in loue, nor in any spirituall graces; for if they continue and stand firme and faithfull to the end, in the holy worke of the ministry they saue themselves, and those that heare them. If their

their loue and zeale waxe colde, and the care ouer the flocke decaye, they cast downe themselves by little and little, and not only that, but they hazard the flockes. It is no light matter for a man to take such a fall in respect of the waight of his own person: how much more that the destruction of the people is laide to his charge? Is it a small matter to be guilty of the peoples blood? O what neede haue the ministers of the gospell to be instant with the Lord to guide them, and to keepe them vpright, that they may stand to the end, and with a feruent loue to Christ and his Church, performe all holy duties? We may see by this Angell of the Church of Ephesus, that very notable men be in danger.

And surely all that runne doe not obtaine: for couetousnes, vaine glory, and ambition doe vtterly in all ages ouerthrow some. Now for the people, yea for vs all, we are taught in this place, how heynous a thing it is before God to waxe colde in loue. No doubt to feele the loue of Christ through faith, and to bee by the same euen constrained to loue him with a feruent loue, and in him and for him tenderly to loue his Church, is a thing in most high price before God, and bringeth forth great fruites. On the contrary part, for these fruites to diminish, and this loue to be abated and still decaying, prouoketh so farre the displeasure of God, that hee threatneth against it grievously. We haue seene what excellent vertues the Lorde commendeth in this shepheard and his flocke, and yet notwithstanding hee threatneth for the want of their first loue if they doe not repent.

Most lamentable is our estate in these dayes: for who can looke vpon any place where the gospell hath been preached but euen a few yeares; and not see, I will not say, decaye of their first loue, and of their former workes, but euen in very deepe almost an vtter forsaking? yea many there be which at the first hearing of the gospell, were so inflamed with the loue of it, & had such a taste of the sweetenes thereof, that they could not but acknowledge the great kindnes of God towards them, and seemed to runne zealously from the wayes of wickednes vnto true godlines, and would euen stirre vp others, which now (as it is written, 2. Pet. 2.) *The dogge to his vomite, and the sow that was washed, to the wallowing in the myre.* And thinke it not strange, for our Sauour foretold this, speaking of the last times, Matthew 24. verse 12. laying, *Because iniquitie shall abound, the loue of many shall waxe colde.* Many neuer come to haue any true loue at all, but despise all goodnes, and hate bytterly all that with sincere affection embrace the light, and they rayle vpon them, as Saint Peter foretolde, 1. Pet. 4. vers 4.

The mischiefe doth not rest in these, these haue not left their first loue which they neuer had, these are not of those which haue declined, and are willed to repent and to doe the former workes, these are not they that are willed to remember from whence they are fallen: but the backe sliding professors of the Gospell: I leaue this thing for them to consider.

Here is yet one thing to be noted, and it is a great thing; and I would to God it were deeply printed and grauen in our harts: for I am perswaded few doe obserue it, both of teachers and people, which casteth downe many. It will bee saide, that to forsake their first loue, is a thing obserued, when it falleth out, either in the ministers

sters, of the gospell, or in the common professors. Yea but yet it is not thoroughly obserued in this poynt, that some doe seeme to themselves and to others to growe vpward, when as in deepe they fall downward, with a grievous and most dangerous fall. They increase in other giftes, as in experience, knowledge, vnderstanding and such like, which are fitte and necessary for all christians, and decaye in loue.

Thus it is, when men are first lightened, their harts are much inflamed with loue and zeale: but there is often great defect of knowledge, and of discretion, and of other good giftes. Time bringeth on these, and in time their loue waxeth colde: they doe espy some errors in their wayes (as who doth not?) which they doe correct: but herein they sayle, yea fall, that they correct loue it selfe, I meane they suffer it to decay, to waxe colde, and to be diminished in them. It is a good thing to correct ignorance, error, and rashnes, and to growe in knowledge and discretion, but withall we must hold the pure loue, and increase also therein: for if that sayle, though we abound in many goodly giftes, let Saint Paul tell vs what wee bee, 1. Corinth. 13. Thou wert a zealous man, full of burning loue to the glory of Christ, and to his Church, and forward to performe euery good worke that might aduance the same, thou art increased in many things: but thy first loue is quenched, thou doest glory as a man lifted vp and beautified, but doe not glory, but remember from whence thou art fallen, and that thou hast lost thy Iewell which did most of all beautifie thee. Repent and turne agayne, and doe the former workes, or else the Lorde doth threaten thee. I may say to another, thou hast goodly learning and knowledge, thou doest excell many wayes, but thou neuer haddest thine hart inflamed with sincere loue and zeale, but hast sought thy belly, remember (I say not from whence thou art fallen, seeing thou diddest neuer clime so high) but what thou comest short of, repent, and let thy latter workes exceede the first.

Let vs all looke vpon this place, let vs labour to abound in spirituall graces, but especially in the holy loue: if we let it be quenched, woe be vnto vs. There remaineth now some mitigation of the threatning, in which the Lord sheweth that this Angell and the Church at Ephesus did one thing highly pleasing vnto him, which is in these wordes, *But this thou hast that thou hatest the workes of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.* That which our Lord loueth, it pleaseth him that we loue the same: and on the other side, looke what he doth hate, and highly loath, it delighteth him that we hate and loath it. He hated the workes of the Nicolaitans, the Church at Ephesus hated them, this was very wel, and for this, much is graunted vnto them. The scripture dooth not tell of whome these Micholaitanes tooke their name, nor what were their workes: but the auncient writers that liued somewhat neere to the times of the Apostles, saye they tooke their name of *Nicholas*, one of the seuen Deacons, Act. 6. And that they held, men might haue their wiues in common. Saint Iude in his Epistle, and Saint Peter in his second epistle chap. 2. Doe write of very filthy persons which were crept into the Churches, and very like it is they were these Nicholaitanes. There haue risen vp filthy monsters in these dayes, as Libertines, such as be of the Familie of loue and others, the Lorde God graunt that wee may hate their workes: pittie the men if they may be any way brought to repentance,

tance, but hate their workes. Thus much for the narration of this epistle: now wee come to the conclusion.

This conclusion is set downe in these words, *Let him that hath an eare, heare what the spirit saith to the Churches: to him that ouercommeth will I giue to eate of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.* In this same conclusion there be two partes: the first is to moue attention to heare, and the other setteth downe the precious promise which is made. When hee saith, let him that hath an eare, &c. It sheweth plainly that that which is directed in these seuen epistles, to the seuen Angels of the Churches, appertaineth in deede and is directed vnto euery Christian man and woman. Secondly, when he calleth vpon, and stirreth vp him to heare that hath an eare, it teacheth that none can heare rightly what the spirit saith, but those to whome it is giuen from aboue: for if these outward eares could serue, why should it be sayd, *let him that hath an eare, &c.* Begge of the Lord to haue the eares of our harts opened, and whereas ye see many that haue these inward eares shut vp, let vs giue most humble thankes to the Lord: for were it not for his mercie, wee should haue continued euen like vnto them. The holy Ghost is the spirit of truth, the spirit of wisdom and of all wholesome counsell: and therefore the spirit whom we ought most reuerently and attentively to hearken vnto: And as I saide, when wee see men shut vp their eares, despise his counsell, and walke on stubbornlie in their owne wicked wayes, wee may see how much we are bound to God that hath opened our eares: and let it moue vs to be faine to heare what the spirit saith to the Churches.

The other part of the conclusion containeth a great promise, euen the promise of eternall life, vnto euery one that ouercommeth. There is no ouercomming, or getting victorie where there is no battaile to be fought: this therefore putteth vs in minde of the state we are here set in, euen in the spirituall battaile against sinne, the world, and the diuell, as souldiers vnder the banner of Iesus Christ: if we fight valiantly and stand to the end, wee shall bee saued: if wee put on the whole armor of God, as *S. Paul* willett, *Ephes. 6.* If we stand in the holy faith: for *S. Iohn* sayth, *This is the victorie which ouercommeth the world, euen our faith, 1. Iohn. 5. vers. 4.* seeing then we haue no promise vnlesse we stand in the faith, and ouercome all the power of the diuell and sinne, let vs seeke by all meanes to haue our faith dayly increased. It is a most worthie and blessed fight that is against such deadly enemies: let vs neuer faynt, the Lord will vpholde vs; hate the diuell and all his wicked wayes, and cleaue fast to that which is good. And yee shall liue for euer: this is the promise which is vttered thus, *I will giue vnto him to eate of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.* This promise is made vnder a figuratiue speech: for in the earthly paradise wherein *Adam* was placed, there was in the midst thereof, the tree of life, which was a Sacrament vnto *Adam*, and whereof he might eate so long as hee stode in obedience. But here the heavenly paradise is spoken of, and in the midst thereof is the Lord Iesus, who is the tree of life: he is the bread of life, *Iohn. 6.* In him, by him, and through him, all that get the victorie shall liue in the heavenly and ioyfull paradise of GOD, for euer and euer. Thus much

much touching this first message which was sent to the Angell of the Church of Ephesus.



The first Sermon.

8. *And vnto the Angell of the Church of the Smyrnians write, these things saith he that is first and last, which was dead and is alive:*
9. *I know thy workes and tribulation, and pouertie, (but thou art rich) and I knowe the blasphemie of them which say they are Iewes, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.*
10. *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: beholde it shall come to passe, that the diuell shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried, and yee shall haue tribulation ten dayes: bee thou faithfull vnto the death, and I will giue thee a crowne of life.*
11. *Let him that hath an eare, heare what the spirit saith to the Churches: bee that ouercommeth shall not be hurt of the second death.*



The second epistle or message is directed to the Angell of the Church of the Smyrnians. They be called the Smyrnians because they dwelled in the citie called Smyrna: as wee know it hath been and is the vsuall manner to call the Citizens by the names of their cities, as of Rome the Romans: of Corinth, the Corinthians, &c. Smyrna (as it is reported by writers) was the chiefe citie of Ionia, and had in it a great Church of sincere Christians, both of men and women which professed the holy Gospell. Who planted this Church at the first, whether *Saint Paul*, or *Saint Iohn*, or other of the Apostles and seruants of Christ, it is not expressed in the Acts of the Apostles, neither as I suppose, can it bee gathered for certaintie. In deede it is not materiall to enquire: but this one thing wee are sure of, that here is a most excellent shepheard, and a right worthie flocke, as it wil appeare by the testimonie which the Lord himselfe giueth of them. There is in deede but one ministerie of the Gospell, and but one church: but there be many ministers and many particular Churches: and as we may here learne, some ministers farre excel others in the heavenly graces, and so is there great difference betweene the particular Churches, which are members of the whole, some being more pure, and some subiect vnto greater spotted and deformities.

The exordium or beginning of this message is taken from the person of him that sendeth it, in these words, *These things saith he that is first, and last, which was dead, and is alieue.* These be the words which he pronounced of himselfe vnto *Iohn* in the former chapter, where hee appeared vnto him in that glorious vision. Here was no need then to reapeate euery part, for he that is the first and the last, &c. is the same which holdeth the seuen starres in his right hand, and walketh in the middest of the seuen golden candlestickes, and that hath his eyes like a flame of fire, &c. It is euen hee which hath all that magnificall power, wisdom, and operation in the Church, in which hee is before described. Then is this Angell and the Church at Smyrna, to receiue attentiuely and reuerently this message sent vnto them from their great Lord. That which he sayth, *I am the first and the last, which was dead and am alieue,* we haue handled before.

These three great and high points of our faith are fully and cleerely set foorth in the same: the first, that *Iesus Christ* is eternall God, before all beginning and without ending: *He is the first and the last.* If he had but a secundarie Godhead as the *Arrians* most blasphemously hould, how could he be the first and the last? The second, that he is a very man, how else could hee die, and be rayfed from the dead? as he saith, *I was dead, but am alieue.* The wicked fiend suggested vnto some in old time, that he had but a phantastical bodie, or a body but in shew, and that he dyed but in apparance. If he were not a man in all things tempted like vnto vs, as the holy Ghost sayth, sinne excepted, *Hebr. 4. ver. 15.* how could hee say, *I was dead, but am alieue?* The third, that the two natures of God and man are so vnited, that they make but one person. The manhood is not the first, that is to say, before all eternitie, nor the Godhead can not die: & yet the same that saith, *I am the first & the last,* saith *I am alieue,* but *I was dead:* because God & mā is but one Christ. For if it were as *Nestorius* maintained, and *Petrus Enaphans*, that in Christ the humane nature was one person by it selfe, and the Godhead which dwelled in him another: how could he that is the first and the last, say, *I am alieue, but I was dead?* Now to the narration.

I know thy workes, &c. I haue shewed before that hee onely can giue iust praise, and dispraise, which perfectly knoweth all workes, beholding the deepest secrets, and intents of all hearts, and that is Christ *Iesus*, who hath his eyes as a flame of fire. It is a comfortable thing, as it is written, *The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous:* *Psalm 1.* for his knowledge is with approbation, yea with supportation: as on the contrarie part he doth behold the way of the wicked, disalloweth and condemneth it, and therefore it shall perish, and come vtterly to nought. Here be diuers partes of this narration (as wee shall see in the particular handling) and yet no one vertue named.

We had in the pastor and Church of Ephesus (as wee noted) sundry particular vertues exprest by name, of great commendation, and in this Angell and church not one in particular. Indeed the Lord sayth, *I know thy workes, thy affliction, and pouertie, (but thou art rich)* and the blasphemie of those which say they bee *Jewes* and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. What then, is not the Angell and Church of Smyrna commended? Commended, yes aboue them all, euen as the

most

most excellēt. For albeit there is no one particular vertue named, yet when he saith, *thou art rich,* speaking of the spirituall riches, for in the worldly riches he was poore: it includeth all vertues, if we ioine this, that the Lord reprobeth no fault in him. Among many goodly vertues in the Church of Ephesus, there was this blot, that they had declined and forsaken their first loue. Other pastours and Churches also are found fault withal, some for one thing, and some for another: but here is nothing reprobued. Here be all Christian vertues both in the shepheards and their flockes, and no grosse voyce: For if there had bin any grosse fault the Lord would not haue concealed it, no more then he doth in the rest.

If we respect the Angell of the Church at Smyrna, that is the pastor, or pastors, (for vnder one diuers pastors may be meant, as well as the whole congregation) he was rich in the precious faith of our glorious Lord *Iesus Christ*, he was rich in knowledge and vnderstanding of the heauenly mysteries, filled with spirituall wisdom, he was rich in loue and zeale, in meekenes and patience: Hee was rich in care and diligence to feede and guide the flocke of Christ. For if any of these had been wanting, how could it be sayd thou art rich? how could hee haue escaped without rebuke? Then if wee respect the Church it selfe, they were excellently well instructed and fed, and builded vp in the truth: they were rich, and enriched in all spirituall graces: they were rich in vertues, and good works: Yea their light did so shine before men that they might see their good workes, and glorifie God, as appeareth in that they be not rebuked nor admonished to repent, nor threatned, as the Church of Ephesus. Here is then a worthie example for all to followe, both pastors and people. What a goodly thing is it, to bee thus allowed and commended of Christ? It is more comfortable then to inioy all the riches and pleasures vnder heauen. But it may be sayd, were they so perfect that no fault could be found in them? Is there any so holy, so iust, so pure, & vpriight in his waies, that he may abide the triall & the sentence of the high Iudge? Is it not written, who vnderstandeth his errors, *Psalm. 19.* &c. who can say my heart is cleane? and doth not Saint *Iohn* say, *If wee say we haue no sinne, we deceiue our selues and the truth is not in vs?* Wee may not so take it, that this not reprobuing him for any fault, doth argue a perfection: but the Lorde doth not mention small things but doth couer them. This Church had her frailties, but was free from grosse offences. Beholde herein the great kindnes of our Lord *Iesus Christ* in couering all the frailties of his true seruants. He is the iudge before whom we shall stand, and we haue many imperfections: how much haue wee to reioyce, that he dealeth thus louingly? If he should neuer approue of vs vntil he should finde vs perfect, and in euery respect to be liked, wee were vtterly lost and cast away for euer: but in those that in singlenes of heart doe loue and obey him, ye see all imperfections, and spottes are couered and forgotten. Let it encourage vs, especially such as serue him in the ministerie of the Gospell, to be cheerefull in performing all good duties. Let vs not faint nor bee discouraged with any troubles, nor with the beholding our frailties, for he will deale most louingly with vs. I will now proceede to the words as they lye.

That hee sayth thine affliction and pouertie, it doth import very euidently, that

this Church was assailed by enemies, and so farre, that it endured no small troubles. For the Lord, if the troubles had beene small, would neuer haue made mention of them. Moreouer, the pouertie which hee doth ioyne with the affliction, did growe partly from the same: For the rage of the enemies was such, that they did in some places euen flie vpon the goods of the Christians, and spoile them: As ye may read how the holy Ghost doth testifie of the beleeuing Iewes in the Church of Iudea; how when they were lightened, they were reproched, and suffered the spoyling of their goods, Heb. 10. vers. 34.

The Lord did know this affliction which his seruants did indure for his sake: for the profession of his name brought it all vpon the. If they had suffered as euill doers, it could be no comfort to heare from the Lord in his glorie that hee did know their affliction: but being for the trueth, it might incourage them notably, that their great captaine vnder whose banner they did fight, beheld how valiantly they did acquite themselves, and shewed his great liking and approbation therof. He taught that they are blessed which suffer persecution for righteousness sake, Matth. 5. and here hee telleth this Angell and the Church, howe hee regardeth their sufferings. Let vs learne here then how to arme our selues against temptations: If it fall so out that affliction doe come heauie vpon vs, our nature is fraile, and the deuill is readie to suggest, that we are forgotten, and that Christ doth not regard vs: will he deale so hardly with those whom he loveth? Yea it is no hard dealing, for the holy scripture in many places as yee know, setteth forth that these afflictions are for the great good of the faithfull: reade the first chapter of the epistle of *Iames*, the first of the first epistle of *Peter*, and also the fourth, and the twelfth chapter of the epistle to the Hebrues, and the latter end of the eleuenth chapter of the first to the Corinthians, and ye shall find how God afflicteth his for their good.

And now further, that the Angell of this Church, and the whole company of the faithfull, were poore touching worldly substance, it sheweth howe they despised the riches of this world to gaine Christ, in whom indeed are all the true treasures: As *Moses* is commended, that he refused to be called the sonne of *Pharaohs* daughter, and chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, then to iuioye the pleasures of sinne for a season, esteeming the rebuke of Christ, greater riches then the treasures of Egypt, Heb. 11. vers. 24. 25. 26. So were they here in the Church of *Smyrna* content to suffer the spoyling of their goods, rather then they would bee driuen from the open, bolde and constant profession of the Gospell and glorious name of our Lord Iesus Christ.

And ye know how our Sauour telleth vs plainely, that if we can not find in our hearts to forsake all that we haue in this world, and to take vp the crosse and follow him, wee can not bee his disciples. The scripture calleth the rich man a foole that built his barnes greater, and layd vp store, Luk. 12. vers. 20. And our Sauour sayth in the next verse there following, so is euery one that heapeth vp treasure, and is not rich toward God. Such then (by the words of Christ) as imbrace the Gospell, although it should be to their vtter spoile in the world, that they may be rich towards God in the true heauenly treasures, be wise men.

And

And on the contrary part, they that are greedy of this world, and heape vp riches and worldly store, not willing to forgoe them for the truthe sake, nor yet desiring to be filled with faith and heauenly vertues that they may be rich to God, be starke fooles. They preferre drosse and trash before fine golde. In this point wee may not reason with flesh and blood: for the worlde doth account them the ranckel fooles that liue, which for their profession will goe so farre as to indure the losse of their goods and dignities, and liue in banishment, in prison, in pouertie, and in contempt: because the worldlings are blind, and can not see the riches which these do treasure vp. Moreouer, they magnifie them highly as wise fellowes, which can so carrie themselves as to keepe and increase their wealth of what religion soeuer, & to climbe vp in the world.

When wee shall suffer affliction and be pressed downe with pouertie and other calamities, let vs call to mind these words of our Sauour, *I know thine affliction and pouertie, but thou art rich*: and if our affliction come vpon vs for the Gospell, it will comfort vs much. Consider yet one thing further in these words touching the Angell of this Church of *Smyrna*, for he (whether it be spoken of one or of more) was afflicted, he was poore, and yet hee was rich. Hee was a right excellent shepheard and tooke great paines in feeding and guiding the flocke of Christ, and yet as ye see his reward in this world was but finall, for hee liued in pouertie. What did not the flocke care for him? yes, if they had beene rich, hee should not haue beene poore. Hee doth not repine at it, he is not an hireling that dealt for filthie lucre, but dealt euen of loue, and as Saint *Peter* requireth of a readie mind, 1. Pet. 5. Hee saw what labours the holy Apostles indured, what daungers they passed through, and howe poore they were touching worldly wealth. As Saint *Paul* testifieth of himselfe and his fellowes, we are poore, and yet make many rich, 2. Cor. 6. v. 10. This is a worthie example for vs to follow: If wee haue giftes of learning for the ministerie, and bee employed, and take paines to the comfort and benefite of the Church, we thinke it so vnworthie a thing to be in pouertie, as that wee are readie to bee impatient at it, and many thinke that the excellencie of the worke of the ministerie may warrant them to heape vp worldly treasures, euen to the detriment of the Church. If the charge be committed vnto vs, and we are to feed the flocke of Christ, and the flock be in that estate that we cannot haue from them the wealth of the world to abound in any plentifull measure, we must be content with that which may suffice euen for necessitie.

We are not better then the holy Apostles were, wee are not better then the Angell of the Church of *Smyrna*, nay well are we if wee walke in their steppes though we come much behind them in regard of their excellencie. Then must wee looke for the reward of our labors, in the seruice of Christ, and of his Church euen as they did, and that is not in this world, but at the appearing of the great shepheard. If we will needes preach the Gospell, and take paines in studie and labours to get wealth and preferments here vpon earth: it shall be sayd vnto vs, ye laboured, but ye had your wages, there is no further reward remayning as due vnto yee. Alas what case shall we be in then? euen turned out with those whom the holy Apostle speaketh

of, whose belly is their God, that mind earthly things, Philip. 3. O how much better is it, to tread downe the loue of the worlde, and to bende all our care and diligence to feede the flocke of Christ, waiting for that crowne of glorie that is laid vp for all Christs faithfull seruants and souldiers?

Whatsoeuer become of vs in this world, I meane, if wee should bee as poore as *Lazarus*, which lay at the rich mans gate, let it not discourage vs, if it may be sayd, I know thy pouertie, but thou art rich. Wee doe all of vs account pouertie in these earthly things an heauie burthen, and indeed it is so, and wee are much afraid of it, and labour to shunne and auoide it: O would to God we could as well feelee, and iudge of the pouertie in spirituall things, which is a burthen a thousand times more heauie and miserable, for then we would be as careful to auoid it, as we are to auoid the other.

There was yet a further affliction layd vpon this pastor and Church of Smyrna, and that is the reproches, and raylings, wherewith vngodly men did reuile Christ Iesus and the Gospell, and all the faithfull. For hee sayth further, *And I knowe the blasphemie of them which say they are Iewes and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.* There be foure things in these words, the first is the blasphemie: the second, that the Lord did know it: the third, who they were that did blaspheme: and the fourth, in what accoūt they were before God, whatsoeuer they boasted themselves to be. To be reuiled, railed vpon and blasphemed by euill men, is a grievous thing, especially when it is for the holy profession, when the pure doctrine, and the Lorde of glory himselfe are with most vile and filthie speeches rayled vpon and blasphemed. Now it was marueilous to heare with what termes they did which were vnbelleeuers, raile vpon the Lord Iesus as a false Prophet, a deceiuer, and one that did all by the power of the deuill. And also to heare how they did terme the Gospell heresie and falshood, and all that beleue it heretikes, and cursed people. This is the blasphemie which our Sauour sayth he did know.

It is vttered for comfort, that the Lord sayth he did know the blasphemie: for he will call the blasphemers to account for it, as Saint *Peter* teacheth, 1. Pet. 4. vers. 5. they shall not escape free, though the Lord seeme to winke at the matter of their raylings vpon his seruants for a time. And the godly shall haue great reward for suffering such reproch for the name of Christ: For this we haue the plaine words of our Sauour; saying, *Blessed are ye when men reuile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of euill against you for my sake falsely: reioyce, and bee glad, for great is your reward in heauen.* Math. 5. Here wee see there is great reward laid vp in heauen for such as are rayled vpon, reuiled, and reproched for the glorious Gospell of Christ, yea so great that he willeth them to reioyce, for they are blessed. Saint *Peter* sayth, if ye be rayled vpon for the name of Christ, *Blessed are ye:* for the spirit of glory and of GOD resteth vpon you, which on their part is euill spoken of, but on your part is glorified, 1. Pet. 4. vers. 14. Now lay these together with that Christ sayth here to this Church, *I knowe the blasphemie, &c.* and you may see it is to let them vnderstand, that they were very highly blessed in suffering such raylings for the name of Christ. *Moses* by faith esteemed the rebuke of Christ greater riches then the trea-

sures of Egypt, Heb. 11. Vnto the nature of man there is nothing almost more grievous then to derided and railed vpon, because it seemeth so great a dishonour and imbasement: but if it be for the name of Christ, that is, for the zealous and sincere professing of the Gospell, that wee will not poure forth our selues and runne with the world vnto all excesse of ryot in drunkennes, filthie ribaldries, and all loosenes in vanities, that wee bee railed vpon, and mocked, as in derision and reproch they vse to say, they be full of the spirite, they be precisians, &c. It is a very great honour and glory, let it not discourage vs or make vs ashamed, for what are wee that wee should bee accounted worthie to beare any rebuke for the glorious sonne of God? Wee see euen at this day the great weakenes of many, they beare some loue to the Gospell, but they heare the reproch and railings which are cast forth vpon those which followe it, and they dare not be seene, least they should be hated and mocked: for a little thing doth snib them.

Let vs set before vs the example of this blessed Angell of the Church at Smyrna, and of the faithfull Christians there. They were blasphemed and railed vpon exceedingly: and we see when any notable strumpet is carted, how they which haue filthie things wil cast them forth vpon her: so did they cast forth vpon these holy seruants of God, all the most vilanous railings, and filthie slaunders they could deuise, and they went through, bare it strongly, and neuer shrunke. And now to encourage them and all others that shall come into the battaile thus to fight vnder the banner of Christ against the deuill and his souldiers, the Lord himselfe from his glorie in the heauens sendeth word, *I knowe the blasphemie:* I know how much thou art railed vpon, and what thou doest suffer for my sake. If men come in place where they heare their prince railed vpon and dishonoured, and they stand bolde in the defence of their princes honour, doe they not account it a great preferment if therefore they be reproched? and doe not the kings and princes of this world highly accept of such faithfulness and loue of their subiects, and are they not readie to aduance them as most trustie? And shall not we then count it an honour very great, where the truth euen the Gospel of Christ the most glorious king, is of vngodly men, euen vassals of Satan railed vpon, if we defend it, and magnifie the dignitie of it, and so suffer hatred, reproches, reuilings and slaunders for the same? Or shall wee thinke that the Lord Iesus doth not know or regard what we indure for his sake, or will he not highly accoūt of, and reward such faithfulness? I beseech you thinke well of this: let it not slip out of your minds, be valiant in the defence of your kings honor.

Now the third thing commeth for to bee considered, and that is who they were that did blaspheme this Church. All the infidels and heathen Idolaters did raile vpon Christ, vpon the Christians, & vpo the Christian religiō: but of al other the obstinate Iewes did excell in blasphemies, & were the most bitter enemies. But he sayth here, they say they are Iewes, but are not. It is not meant that they were not Iewes according to the flesh, (for they were the seed of *Abraham* according to the flesh) but they were not Iewes in that sense in which they boasted, that is to say, they were not the true Church and children of God. For to bee right Iewes indeed, was to be the

true children of *Abraham* according to the faith, it was to be in deede regenerate, sanctified, and circumcised in hart. And so Saint *Paul* setteth it forth in his epistle to the Romanes: for he is not a Jew (saith he) which is a Jew outward, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardlie, and the circumcision of the hart, which consisteth in the spirite, and not in the letter is circumcision, whose praise is of God, and not of men. Rom. 2. verse 28. 29. These obstinate blasphemers were Jewes outwardly, and circumcised in the flesh, bearing there the seale of Gods covenant, but as the Prophets complayne euery where of the auncient rebels, their wicked forefathers, that they were vncircumcised in hart, so were these. They boasted most arrogantly that they were the onely true Church of God, and in most shamefull manner railed vpon the Christian Religion.

They could make shewes comming out of the loynes of *Abraham*, and being of that holy people which God had chosen out of all nations, and separated to himselfe as his peculiar, and vnto whom he had graunted so many priuiledges and speciall dignities. But now through hardnes of hart, blindnes and infidelitie, hauing reiected the Saniour of the worlde, and the worde of life, they are no longer the Church of God, but as the Lord saith here, the very synagogue of Sathan, which is the fourth poynt.

O what a fall is here? How much were they deceiued in their opinion? They came of that blessed stocke, they had the covenant, and were the onely people, and visible Church: and now (so many as blasphemed Christ) quite cast down, and become the malignant Church of the diuell. It was very requisite, considering in what glorie the Jewes had been, and how they gloried still of their fauour with God, that the Lord should testifie thus much of them from Heauen, that all their assemblies, in which they read *Moses* and the Prophets, and seeme to worship the true God, are but blasphemous assemblies, and synagogues of Sathan. No man is to bee troubled with that which they glorie and bragge of, out of *Moses* and the Prophets: They are fallen from their dignitie and glorie, in denying him which was the ende of the lawe. This is a speciall place to bee considered, not onely for the Jewes, but also betweene the Papists and vs: they boast and glorie of the Church of Rome, as the onely true spouse of Christ: and they rayle vpon all that embrace the heauenly doctrine of the Gospell, terming them heretikes, and schismatikes, and deuising against them most filthie lies and slanders.

But seeing they haue forsaken the true doctrine, and set vp a doctrine and worship of their owne deuising, maintaining all manner of superstition, lies, and idolatries, shewing themselves the very blasphemous Church of Antichrist that whore of Babylon, why should we sticke to pronounce them plainly, to be as they be in deede, not the chaste spouse of Christ, but the whorish Church, euen the synagogue of Sathan? What priuiledges haue they to boast of more then the Jewes had? Rome in olde time had a famous godly Church in it, of true sincere Christians. It had godly Bishops which gaue their liues for the testimonie of our Lorde Iesus Christ: what doth that helpe these which are fallen from that holy faith and godlines? The high Priests were the successors of *Aaron*, the Scribes and Pharisees did

fit

fit in *Moses* chayre, the lawe came out of Sion, and the worde of the Lorde from Ierusalem: Rome was neuer comparable to that Church for sundrie respectes. And now because like the degenerate Jewes they rayle vpon vs, and glory that they be the onely true catholike Christians, shall it moue or trouble vs? Seeing that for all their boasting they may be, and in deede are (as wee know by cleere testimonies of Gods word) the synagogue of Sathan. Let vs stand firme, and bolde, in the defence of Christs glorie and worship against them, and let them raile, and slander and blasphemie euen their fill: As the Lorde saide to the Angell of the Church of the Smyrneans, I know the blasphemie of those which say they are Jewes but are not, but are the synagogue of Sathan: so will he say vnto vs, I know the railing, reproches and blasphemies of those which say they be the true Catholike Christians, but are not, but are the limmes of Antichrist the Church of the diuell. The Romans set forth such glorie of their Church, and boast of priuiledges, as if they were the onely flowre of the world: but reade after in this booke, and yee shall finde, their Church is the mother of whoredomes and abominations.

There is great oddes betweene that which they glorie and bragge of, and that which the Lord pronounceth them to be: but some man will say, if we could see it as euident, that the Lorde calleth the Church of Rome the false malignant Church of Antichrist, as it is here that he calleth the Church of the Jewes, the synagogue of Sathan: it might greatly bolden vs to stand against them, and to indure all their reproaches for the gospell of Christ. But they say they blaspheme the holy Catholike Church, the spouse of Christ, which say the Church of Rome is that whore of Babylon. It is no matter what they saye, but what the infallible trueth proclaymeth, what the holy Ghost, the spirite of truth saith: the Jewes thinke and say that they be the holy people, beloued of God: the Lorde himselfe saith they be of the diuell. The Papists saye they be the onely true christians: the Lord doth not in expresse termes, say the Pope or the popish kingdome is the great Antichrist, Rome is the seate of Antichrist, and that the Papists worship the diuell: but yet all these are so cleere set forth in this booke, that he which is not blinded, euen by the iudgement of God vpon him, or that dooth not euen obstinatelie shut his eyes, may see them to be out of all doubt. But this by the grace of God we shall see when we come to those places.

Thus haue we seene the commendation of this Angell and his flocke, and what they indured for the Lords cause. Now he encourageth them against those sufferings which were yet behinde: *Feare none of those things* (saith he) *which thou shalt suffer, &c.*

First wee may note here, that euen as the captaines in warre doe exhort and stirre vp their souldiers to bee valiant, so the great captaine doth his souldiers in this spirituall battaile. Other captaines can but moue and perswade, they cannot put strength and victorie, and so some of them euermore are overthrowne: but this captaine biddeth feare not, hee giueth strength, and cleauing vnto him, and following his direction, they fight not doubtfullie, but are sure to get the victorie: when he saith feare not, let all the diuels of hell come, we are safe enough.

enough. Was not this a goodly consolation, was it not singular fauour and loue, to forewarne them of dangers approaching, and to bid them be out of feare? Hee doth the same to vs all, if we will be directed by him.

Secondly wee are to note, that the troubles which were to come vpon this Church should come in a terrible manner: for they were strong, and had suffered much before, and a little would not make them afraide. And he saith not in vaine euen to such valiant tried souldiers, feare none of the things which thou shalt suffer, the enimie will set vpon thee very fierce and grimme, hee will make all the terror he can, and if thou bee not well armed, hee will put thee in feare, but stand fast in the faith, and thou shalt ouercome.

Then we may note here further, that all their former calamities and afflictions, by which they were brought into pouertie and so much reuiled, and rayled vpon, did not free them from further and from greater trials. The diuell had a desire to assaile them yet further, and the Lord giueth him scope. It is a thing greatlie to be noted, and whereof we may haue speciall vse: we heare of the crosse, and of afflictions for the gospel, and many can stand for a brunt or two very valiant: but perceiuing that there is none end, but still they may looke for new, and it may be more grieuous, they begin to waxe wearie, to fainte, and to withdraw themselves by little and little out of the dint and edge of the battaile. We are readie to thinke if wee haue suffered some things, that we haue done enough: whereas in deede we are vnder this captaine to receiue all assaultes, and onsets that may bee made, euen to our last breach. Say not then I haue suffered much, I may now take mine ease and bee spared, but learne heere that there may be yet far greater things behinde, and seeke to be armed against they come. For it is so precious a thing to enter into glorie, and to raigne with Christ, that to attaine vnto it, we ought with Saint *Paul* to account all the sorrowes and afflictions of this life, light and momentane, and not worthie of it.

What fooles are they which will lose such glorie, rather then they will indure hatred and reproach, the losse and spoyling of their goods, pouertie, imprisonment and death? The Lord willing them not to feare any of the things that they should suffer: now he telleth what should come vpon them, *Beholde saith he, it shall come to passe, that the diuell shall cast some of you into prison, &c.* Marke well how the Lord telleth them that the diuell shall doe this, he shall cast them into prison. It is a great encouragement to know that the battaile is against such an enimie, therefore he is noted as the graund captaine on the other side, and as the chiefe agent. A thing needfull to be knowne, because the diuell is not seene to worke it.

Persecutions against the Church are raised by Princes and Potentates, as at that time the Church at Smyrna and other Churches were persecuted by the power of the Romane Emperors. Now we must know that the powers be of God: & when they persecuted the true Christians, they pretended it was for their disobedience to gouernement, and danger which they brought vnto the common wealth, because they would not doe sacrifice to Idols. And least the weake might be troubled and cast downe by thinking it came from princes, & from the power ordained of God: the

the Lord taketh away this doubt, and saith: the diuell shall cast some of you into prison. The diuell shall put into the hart of the Emperour to persecute the Churches, and the diuell shall inflame the harts of inferiour gouernours and officers, vnder him with bloodie and cruell hatred of the Christian name, and the diuell shall fill the harts of the blinde multitude with mad furie, and so they as his instruments shall runne violently vpon you. In this place we haue a lesson taught vs to iudge of persecutions. When the true and faithfull seruants of God are persecuted, there is alwaies a great shew made by the persecutors that it is for their misdemeanor. They doe it, they will say, euen in zeale of their dutie towards God, and no doubt many thinke so. But in truth whatsoeuer they pretend, yee see it is the diuell in them that doth all: they doe but execute his will: they doe but satisfie their owne bloodie desires. The powers are to punish and roote out euill doers, and godly princes doe punish, and imprison heretikes and seducers: but where were euer any persecuted by wicked tyrants for the truth, but they pretend it is for euill? Let vs be wise then, and looke into the cause for which men doe suffer, and not what is pretended.

Here is a good lesson for all those which oppose themselves against the preaching and profession of the Gospel, if it might please God to open any of their eyes for to see it. They beare themselves in hand oftentimes, that they doe well, yea that they doe good seruice to GOD, when as in very deede, the diuell beareth all the whole sway in their harts, and setteth them a worke, they doe but fulfill his lustes. Their harts in deed are inflamed with wrath, but the diuell is the bellows to blow vp, and to make the fire to flame, he moueth the hart, which they doe not perceiue. They take craftie counsell, and deuise mischieuous practises, but the subtil diuell doth helpe to suggest the same into their mindes. They giue their tongues to lie, to slander, to rayle, and blaspheme, but the father of lies doth thrust them forward. And to speake in a word, whatsoeuer they doe, he hath an oare in it. He being their Master that setteth them a worke, they shall haue their hire with him: then may we learne here in what miserable estate all the enemies of the true seruants of God be, the diuell hateth extremely the children of light, and coueteth to haue them rooted out: because his kindgome is hindred by them. And seeing he hath no way to deale against them: of himselfe but by temptations, which they resist, he is driuen into a rage, and seeketh instruments that haue power, which may execute that crueltie which hee desireth. These like blinde men runne in rage and furie, not knowing whose seruants they be, or whose will they execute. He vseth them but homely oftentimes: for when they haue tolde foule lies, and rayled slaunders, and it fall out that the truth cometh to light, and all men see they haue lyed shamefullie, so that for a time they bee halfe ashamed, yet he thrusteth them on againe, and how often soeuer they be taken tardie, yet they must on forward. Thus much that he saith, the diuell casteth into prison.

The kindnes of our Sauour to his faithful seruants hath appeared euen in this, that he forewarned the of the dangers to come, & encouraged them not to feare: but he sheweth it yet further by adding most comfortable things. The first of them is in these words, *That thou maiest be tried.* This setteth forth the counsell and purpose of the

the Lord, or to what end he would haue them suffer affliction: and that is, not for any harme towards them, but indeed for their great good. For this trying which he speaketh of, is a right worthy thing, and to the singular commoditie of the faithfull. Read the first chapter of the epistle of Saint *James*, and ye shall find that hee willethe vs to account it all ioy, when we fall into diuers temptations, knowing, as hee setteth down, vnto what integritie we are brought through the trying of our faith: and that the man is blessed which endureth temptations, because when he is tryed, hee shall receiue the crowne of life, &c.

Likewise ye may read what Saint *Peter* sayth touching the same, Yee are in heauines through manifolde afflictions, that the triall of your faith being much more precious then gold that perisheth, though it bee tryed with fire, might be found, to be to your praise, and honour, and glorie, at the appearing of Iesus Christ, 1. Pet. 1. 6. 7. Likewise in the fourth chapter of the same epistle, hee exhorteth them not to think it a strange matter concerning the fierie triall which was come among them, for to proue them. Then marke this, the deuill in a rage would terrifie and throw downe all, and stirreth vp cruell and bloudie tyrants to make all theshewe of terror that may bee: both the deuill and his instruments doe all of a most wicked purpose euen with wrath and malice, euen to trie if they can with any feare make them denie and fall from the truth. This is the triall they make. But the high Lord ouer all, which gouerneth and directeth all things according to his good pleasure, will haue his seruants tried to a farre other purpose, and that is, as the golde is put into the fire to be tried, to haue the drosse and mixture burnt out, and so to bee fined and made more pure and bright: so the faithfull are cast into the furnace of afflictions, that they also may be fined and become more tried and pure. Is not this a good comforte to make vs cheerefully to beare troubles for the Lordes cause? what wise man indeed will not reioyce in that which is for his great good?

The next comfort here ministred is in the shortnes of the time which this persecution shall last, vttered in these words, *And ye shall haue affliction ten dayes*. Although we feele and find by experience that afflictions doe vs good, yet our frayle nature will hardly indure them long, and in continuance of time wee waxe wearie and are readie to faint, if we see no likelihood but that they will continue. For this cause the Prophet proclaimeth in the Psalm, The rod of wickednes shall not rest vpon the lot of the righteous, that the righteous stretch not forth their hands vnto wickednes. Psalm. 125.

Accordingly, the Lord foresheweth to this Church at Smyrna, that their persecution for the great violent heate and terror of it, should not last euer, nor yet continue long, for he sayth it should be but for ten dayes. This is indeede a very short time, if we take it but for tenne of these naturall dayes, whereof euery one consisteth but of 24. houres: but the holy scripture sometimes in the Prophets, and namely in *Daniel* vseth so many dayes, for so many yeares, as euery weeke is seuen yeares: and so it semeth to be in this place, ten dayes, that is, ten yeares. Why should it not then as well be sayd yeares? if it be meant ten yeares. There is reason for that, we be no good measurers of time, we thinke a few yeares to be a wonderfull long time. And therefore

therefore the Lord leadeath vs to consider of yeares rightly, to be indeed as nothing, and which speedily come to an end.

It seemeth that this persecution of the Church of the Smyrneans, which is sayd to be for ten dayes, was that which was raised vp by the Emperour *Traianus*: for hee followed very shortly after this message was sent, vnder him (as ancient histories do report) was the Church at Smyrna persecuted, and his persecution did continue ten yeares. Saint *Iohn* receiued this reuelation toward the end of the raigne of *Dominian*. Then next succeeded *Nerua*, whose Empire lasted but one yeare, foure months, and nine dayes. After followed *Traianus*, he reigned 19. yeares, he began to persecute at the tenth yeare of his raigne, and continued vnto his end: and so this affliction of ten yeares came to an end and vanished as if it had beene but for tenne dayes.

Now remayneth the last comfort, which is the greatest, expressed thus, *Bee thou faithfull vnto the death, and I will giue thee a crowne of life*. This is a precious promise, and full of sweete consolation vnto all the afflicted seruants of Christ. They bee sharpe bruns which they indure for the time, but being once brake through them, they enter into the high glory to bee crowned kings, and to raigne in ioy for euer. But see how this promise dependeth vpon a condition: and that is, if wee continue faithfull to the end: for hee sayth, Be thou faithfull vnto the death, and I will giue thee a crowne of life. If we runne a great part of the race swiftly, and then stay, turne aside, or goe backe againe, what shall it auail vs? If we fight manfully vnder the banner of Christ, against sinne, the worlde, and the deuill a long time, and then our faith faile and we cowardly yeeld, be taken captiues, and overcome, what haue we gained? Our Sauour sayth, He that continueth to the end, he shall be saued, Math. 24. That he sayth, *Vnto the death*: it forewarneth that the persecution among them should bee vnto blood. And the histories doe shew that *Polycarpus* disciple of Saint *Iohn*, a very old man, after hee had many yeares serued the Lorde Iesus as a right faithfull shepheard ouer this flocke of God at Smyrna, did most constantly suffer, and dyed a glorious Martyr. We haue not yet resisted vnto blood, struing against sinne, as the holy Ghost speaketh, Hebr. 12. The battaile being against sinne, and the crowne of glory set before vs, let vs not faint nor giue ouer for the sheading of our blood: for if we doe, if wee yeelde vnto the enemies, we are not worthie to be crowned with the crowne of life. The Lord increase our faith, and vpholde vs and keepe vs vp right in the battaile, as his true and faithfull souldiers, euen to the end. Thus much for the narration of this epistle, now to the conclusion.

Let him that hath an eare, heare what the spirite saith to the Churches: Hee that overcommeth shall not be hurt of the second death. Here is againe as it were a publicke proclamation to stirre vp and to moue attention in all that haue cares, to heare what the spirite sayth to the Churches. No man can heare except the Lorde giue him an eare, let vs beg it of him instantly. O would to God we could heare thoroughly well what this is that he sayth, hee that overcommeth shall not be hurt of the second death: for then would it stirre vs vp to fight valiantly in the Lords battaile, and

and to stand against all the terror of death, and torments whatsoever. For what though wee lie as yet subiect vnto the first death, that is the separation of the soule from the body, and so our bodies putrifie & turne to dust? Yet holding the faith, and being thereby armed with the mighty power of God, wee get the victory ouer the world, and ouer the prince of this world, so that the second death, which is the eternall damnation, both of soule and body in hell, shall not hurt vs. Our victory then which we get through faith, hath a double commodity, the one, that it deliuereth vs from the torment of the second death, (which were a great benefite, if we should be after without feeling, either of good or euill, as the beast is after he is dead) and the other, that we shall be crowned with the crown of life. These two things be so of such waight, that it ought to moue our hearts vnto a daily & continual care about all other things to seeke to be established in the most holy faith, that we may ouercome.



The sixt Sermon.

12. *And to the Angell of the Church which is in pergamus, write, these things saith he that hath the sharpe sworde with two edges:*
13. *I know thy workes, and where thou dwellest, euen where the throne of Sathan is, and thou holdest my name, and hast not denied my faith, euen in those dayes when Antypas my faithfull martyr was slaine among you, where Satan dwelleth.*
14. *But I haue a fewe things against thee, because thou hast there them that maintaine the doctrine of Balaam, which taught Balake to put a stumbling blocke before the children of Israel, that they should eate of meate sacrificed vnto idols, and commit fornication:*
15. *Euen so haste thou them which maintaine the doctrine of the Nicholaitanes, which thing I hate.*
16. *Repent, or else I will come vnto thee shortly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.*
17. *Let him that hath an eare heare what the spirite saith vnto the Churches, to him that ouercometh will I giue to eate Manna that is hid, and will giue him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, but he that receiveth it.*



He third epistle is sent to the Angell of the Church in Pergamus. This Pergamus was the chiefe citie of Phrygia, in which Christ had now his faithfull flocke. The exordium of this message, is from the description of the most high and mighty sonne of God, described onely here with this one part of the vision, that it is hee which hath the sharpe sword with two edges: for by this one part they might be induced to thinke vpon all

all the rest of his glory. This sworde is the liuely worde which is come out of his mouth: It may right well be sayd to be a sharpe two edged sword, for it slayeth sin and corruption in the faithfull, and it killeth with eternall destruction all the vnbelieuers and euill men, and cutteth downe all wicked heresies. And here is mention made of it, because the Lord saith afterward hee would fight with it against those wicked corrupters of that Church: euen those spots and blots that were among the, as Saint Iude speaketh. The Church and all her true children are armed with this sword against the deuill, and against all other enemies, and it shall slay and destroy them all. Thus much may suffice touching the exordium or entrance of this epistle.

Then in the narration he sayth, *I know thy workes*. And so he telleth them what he did commend in them, and what he did disallow, adding both an admonition for repentance, and a threatning if that did not follow. It doth indeed very manifestly appeare, that the pastor of this flocke was also a right worthy seruant of Christ, full of spirituall giftes, and that the flocke also followed his steppes: and yet here is but one vertue named for which the commendation is giuen, and that is, their constant, open, and bolde profession of the name and faith of Christ, euen in the midst of hot persecution, and in the midst of Satans gard. This diuine constancie in the truth (as we shall see by circumstances) could not be without many other precious vertues, though they be not named. And we may consider first, that it is a meruailous thing by which the Lord doth commend vnto all posterities the valiant constancie and fortitude of this pastor of the Church in Pergamus, and the constancie and boldnes of the flocke: when hee sayth, *Thou dwellest where Satan hath his throne*. The deuill had preuailed in all places of the world, and as a great Lord bare sway, but yet in some places he did carrie them deeper into all blindnes and horrible impieties then in other. And that is meant here when the Lorde sayth that Satan had his throne in Pergamus: hee did raigne there in an exceeding high manner, he had men so vnder his dominion, and was so great a commander, that hee might attempt almost what he would. What a place was this Church of Pergamus then planted in? and what an incommodious habitation had it? They did dwell euen at Satans court gate, by his royall palace, and by the seate of his kingdome: and euen in the midst of his gard and garrisons of his souldiers. Here was euen as sweet dwelling as Lot had among the Sodomites, of whome Saint Peter reporteth, that from day to day he tormented his righteous soule, in hearing, and seeing their vngodly deedes. For here the holy seruants of God abhorring filthie vncleannes both in wordes and deedes, were euen constrained to heare of and to see much which could not but highly vex the: seeing this is the custome of Satans vassals whom he thrusteth headlong into all abominatiō, if they see any vexed at it, to do it the more. What raylings, what blasphemies, what reproches against Christ, against his Gospell and Church, were there poured forth, and did euen as flouds runne downe the streetes, yee may coniecture? what filthines or vncleannes in all other vices could there be wanting? The holy Gospell of our Lord Iesus Christ, is most pure and full of heauenly light, disclosing and condemning all such abominations. The faithfull Christians which professe the same, walke as the children of the light, and will haue

no fellowship with the vnfruitfull workes of darkenes, but reprove them. Oh what a spite was this, and what a disgrace vnto Satan, that such a doctrine, and such a companie must come and bee seated euen vnder his nose, and euen at his court gates? And what a griefe did this strike into the minds of his ministers, that now they must be detected and rebuked, and could not so quietly as before performe their seruice vnto their great Lord with such pleasure as before? For it taketh away some of their delight in the doing when euill men doe perceiue their deedes bee discouered and misliked. Then howe mad was the deuill? what meanes and wayes would hee leaue vnought, vtterly for to roote out this Church? And how ready were all his seruants to accomplish his will? Satan their prince sitting in his throne, that is in deed in their hearts which were his vassals, hee would kindle all wrath and rage in them, and inflame their hearts with all sauage crueltie. Hereupon was raised bitter persecution euen vnto death.

Then consider all this, and it doth highly magnifie (as I sayd) the valiant constancie of this Church. For it is added, *And thou keepest my name, and hast not denied my faith, in the dayes that Antipas my faithfull Martyr was slaine among you, &c.* It standeth thus for the sense, thou dwellest where Sathan ruleth as king, sitting vpon his throne, and hauing so manye to obeye his will, raiseth vp all mischieses, terrours, and daungers, euen so farre that some haue bene cruellie murdered among you, and yet thou hast stood constant, thou hast not bene afraide, nor ashamed to confesse mee, and to profess my faith, euen in the middest of all Satans rout, when thou couldest see nothing but extreme dangers and perils. This praise is great by reason of these circumstances: The gouernour of a ship and the mariners in a calme sea are not tried: it is no matterie nor praise for them to keepe vpright: But if in boysterous tempestes, and through the raging surges they can keepe vpright, and goe safe through, it is to their great commendation. The Captaine in warres, and his souldiers are not said to be valiant vpon no assault of enemies, or for some light skirmish: but if they bee set vpon on euery side, and compassed round about with fierce and terrible enemies, and are not then abashed, nor shrink nor, but stand valiantly in the fight, and giue the repulse to their enemies, who doth not magnifie their courage? This captaine ouer the Lords band at Pergamus, and those christian souldiers, were wonderfully set vpon by Satan and his armies, and yet stood it out to the ende as conquerours. Their ship was tossed exceedingly, and yet they carrie her safe vnto the shoare: were they not worthie of high commendation? Yes, and the Lord from heauen giueth them the praise of it. Thus we see the meaning of the words. Now let vs see what is to be gathered more particularly from the same.

That they dwelled where Satan had his throne, it sheweth first what miserable estate all men are in without Christ, euen vnder the cruell tyrant Satan, who ruleth in their corrupt lustes, and holdeth them captiue to do his will. For albeit some are led more deeply into thraldome then others, yet all that haue not Christ raigning in them, are the seruants of Satan, and their case is very wofull.

Secondly, this doth magnifie and extoll the mercie of God, that would send his

gospel

gospel into such a place, euen almost as it were into hell, for could it be much better where Satan had his throne? It may teach vs to offer the gospel, if it be our calling, euen vnto most wicked people, hoping that God may draw at the least some of them out of the iawes of Satan: the power of the heavenly doctrine is such.

Thirdly, as we may see, it extollet the might of our Lord Iesus Christ, not only in planting his Church there, but in preserving it. For will Satan make small resistance when that is set vp which casteth him downe, and euen in the place where he dwelleth? Men can better indure that which they mislike, if it be further from them, then if it be iust by them. Then that hee sayth, thou hast kept my name and not denied my faith, it is a most excellent thing. The deuill laboureth nothing more, then through terror of persecution to driue men from confessing Christ: and Christ himselfe sayth, that if we deny him before men, he wil deny vs before his father, and before the holy Angels, yea though it bee so that we can not confesse him but with the extreme perill of our liues. For our Lord Iesus is a most honorable king, full of glory, and such as are called to beare his name, and to stand in the defence of his glory, it is the greatest honour that in this world can light vpon any man: And shall men then be ashamed of him when he is blasphemed? What an vnworthy thing is that? how vnworthy are they to be partakers of his so great glory with him? Seeing if we will raigne with him in glory, wee must not refuse to beare his crosse, and to be reproched for him. Let vs not shrink though we be compassed about with neuer so many wicked enemies, but follow the example of this Church of Pergamus. We shall haue the same praise which they had from the Lord: we shall by his power tread downe Satan, and raigne with him our Lord in his euerlasting kingdome. It is much to be marked that he putteth both these two together, That they kept his name and denied not his faith. For this sheweth that a bare confession of Christs name is not sufficient, but we must hold his doctrine and faith: for the deuill coueteth that men may vnder the bare profession of the name of Christ, deny Christ. If heretikes and wicked men hold of his name, they dishonour him more then such as vtterly denye him. The whole poperie is broached vnder the name of Christ, which destroyeth his doctrine and his faith, and setteth vp the doctrines of deuils. Nowe when they persecute with fagot and sworde all that imbrace and profess the faith of Iesus, many thinke they may deny the doctrine, because they deny not the name of Christ.

But let vs learne out of this place that we must not deny the faith, or the pure doctrine of the gospel, if we wil confesse Christ aright. If the deuill can driue vs from the doctrine, to deny that, euen any principle of our holy faith, it is enough for him, he doth separate vs from Christ. For wee haue no hold nor no part in Christ but by a liuely faith, and the faith is founded vpon the pure doctrine of Gods word. What comfort then can that man haue in professing the name of Christ, which knoweth not the doctrine of faith, despiseth it rather, or hee that knoweth it, and for feare of daunger denyeth it, still holding a profession of Christs name? These are baptized, and the Church doth swarme full of them, but the Lorde in his time will fanne out such chaffe. Learne thou then to know the holy faith euen all the pure doctrine of

our Lord, stand fast in it, fight the good fight of faith. Obey and bring forth fruits agreeable to Gods most holy will: and let Satan and his instruments utter all their malice against thee: let them rack and torment thy body, let them shed thy blood, and take away thy life, it is all they can doe, thou shalt be crowned as a conqueror with the crowne of glory, and eternall blessednes. We are called, and haue giuen our names vnto Christ, to fight vnder his banner against the deuill and against sin. This Church at Pergamus (as ye see) was euen in the edge and dinte of the battaile. They stood valiantly vnto it.

If we abide not so fore brunts, nor so bitter assaults, and yet be made to turne our backes and to become cowards, what excuse can be made for vs? No doubt Satan is a great prince, and hath a great stroke in all places, where soeuer a man be professing Christ he can not be out of the battaile: yet it is in some place more fore then in other. If the Lorde haue set vs as it were in the hindermost parte of the campe where we indure but smal assaults in comparison, and yet doe faint, what would we doe if we dwelt where Satan hath his throne? We are at the will of our Emperor to set and place vs in what ranke he will, and if he doe appoynt vs to encounter with the greatest enemies, and to meet them in the face, the more fierce and strong they be, the more valiantly we must resist: for we are sure of the victorie. There is nothing more glorious in this world then to fight the good fight of faith, to pul downe Satan from his throne, and to destroy sinne. Satan will rage and roare at this, they shall haue much trouble which goe about it, euen by as many as he can stirre vp against them. Let no man dreame of a quiet aduancing of the Gospell. I speake the more of this vpon the worthy example of this church, because there be many which can be content to heare the Gospell, and to speake well of it so long as it bringeth no trouble, but they are wearie, & will professe it no further, then they may without rebuke or danger. There be some which betray the Lords cause, and runne from his tents, to the tents of Satan. They fought a while, and seemed worthy souldiers, but now shake hands with the enemies, and fight for the deuill, and approue such wicked wayes, as they haue before condemned.

Well to conclude this point, thinke not thy selfe vnhappy if thou bee st troubled much, and indurest hard things for the name of Christ, but reioyce if thou maiest any way be a meane to breake downe any peece of Satans kingdome, and to further the kingdome of Christ. It is a blessed worke, and not to be shrunk at for any peril. If the place where thou dwellest, be so full of wicked men, and of all wickednesse, that it may bee sayde that Satan hath his throne there, faint not, but remember this Church at Pergamus: it is not thy case alone, and the more that the strength of sin increaseth, the more the malice of the enemies aboundeth: resist with the greater courage and strength of Gods spirite, for then is no time to faint, or to bee negligent.

Now followeth the other part which commendeth the constancie of this Angell, and of the congregation with him in professing the name and faith of Christ, and that is, when there was persecution vnto blood among them, and such crueltie shewed, if it had been possible to terrifie them, and cause them to deny their profes-

sion:

sion for Antipas was murdered by Satans seruants, euen for the zeale of his wicked throne: and they of the Church, professing the same faith that hee died for, what could they looke for but cruell death? Euen to bee dealt withall as hee was, vnlesse they would recant their doctrine, and doe as their neighbours about them did: and yet they stood firme and constant. Their minde was fully set, if they had been laid hold of and put to it, to haue giuen vp their liues, as Antipas did, and to haue endured the sheading of their blood, rather the so much as in any outward shew to deny their redeemer. The Lord God of his mercie graunt vnto vs the like constant boldnes, if euer wee bee called vnto any triall, that we may bee praised by Christ as they were. They were euen as Martyrs before God, that in minde they were thus settled, and looked for none other but cruell death and torments: so the thing was as done before God. *Abraham* did not slay his sonne *Isaake* at the commaundement of God, but before God it was as done, because he meant none other, and was lifting vp his hand to strike, but then was commaunded to stay his hand.

The Angell of the Church at Pergamus and the flocke with him, were not all brought to suffer the crueltie vnto death, but they looked for it, and made full account, they went not one hayre breadth from the truth to shun any perill, and this pleased God. But here is mention made but of one that was put to death among them, that is Antipas: it is not vnlike but that they murdered more besides him, being the place where Satan had his throne, but he is onely mentioned as a worthy man aboue others. It may bee (as writers report) that hee was a pastor ouer that flocke, euen a captaine to leade the bands, and therefore especiallie hated and killed: for the diuell doth feele who doth wound him or his kingdome most deepe, and against him he is in the greatest wrath and furie. And his seruants likewise, his courtiers, the more gloriouſlie the light breaketh forth in any, and the power of the truth, the more their madnes is inflamed, for they will not haue any light come into their Lords hall, but loue darkenes rather then light, because their workes be euill. For euery one that euill doth (saith the Lord) hateth the light, and cometh not to the light. *Cain* slew his brother *Abel*, and why slew he him? (saith Saint *Iohn*) because his workes were euill, and his brothers were good.

Well whether this one blessed Martyr were slaine alone in that Church, or whether their crueltie extended further, and slew some other, yet here we may beholde the great prouidence and protection of God ouer his, in brideling the malice and rage of the diuell, and of the wicked. We may bee sure that Satan doth desire that all the faithfull were rooted out, if hee had power to bring it to passe, it should not fayle but be done. Here in the citie Pergamus, he sitteth in his throne as King, the Church is compassed about with his route of seruants, and all of them inflamed with wrath and furie by him, and yet but one man, or some few slaine by them: why were they not all beate downe and destroyed? Who bridled this mighty tyrant in the heate of his displeasure? Euen the Lord Iesus, who hath trode downe Satan, and can preserue his Church, dwelling among a rabblement of as good as may bee found in hell.

Let this teach vs, when wee beholde the multitude of vngodly enemies, and

thinke that by mans reason all will downe, let it I say, teach vs not to despayre, but to remember that the Lord doth so bridle Satan, that he will preferue his little flock euen where Satans throne is, and neither he nor the proudest seruant hee hath, shall touch them further then may bee for their triall, and their great good. Yee see fell dogges which are chayned vp, how they barke and strue for to breake loose at such as passe by, that they may bite and teare them: euen so the diuels are chayned vp by the prouidence and rule which God hath ouer them, that albeit they rage and freat to haue scope to runne vpon all, yet they can reach no further then he doth enlarge their chayne. The vassals of the diuell, whose mindes he doth possesse, fume, and gnash their teeth, and wish that all were hanged vp out of the way, which with any earnest and sincere affection professie the gospel; they raile, they lie, they slander, they stir what they can: but the Lord hath them chayned vp also: and although at some times hee giueth them large scope to afflict his people, yet hee shorteneth their chayne againe, and tieth them vp, when hee will refresh with peace his poore seruants. Let vs not doubt of this, seeing they could doe no more here where he faith Satan did dwell, and where his throne was.

Then further let vs note what honorable mention the Lord maketh of his seruant *Antipas* which was slaine: hee calleth him his faithfull martyre. For it teacheth vs, how deare and precious vnto Christ the glorious martyrs bee: the persecutors doe account them the most base and vile things vpon the earth, yea euen the off-scouring, and as it were the scumme, not worthie to liue among men. They curse and reproach them, they raile vpon them, they put vpon them all the torments which they can denise: but contrariwise (as we be here taught) before God they are as precious pearles among heapes of base stones. They are blessed, and after their paines here ended, they liue with the Lord in glorie: they bee honorable among the Angels in Heauen: their memorie is blessed vpon the earth, among all posterities that feare God.

This may teach vs, to search out the holy faith, euen the pure doctrine of Christ, that sound truth, which hee himselfe hath deliuered, and as the faithfull witnes sealed with his blood. And then it may encourage vs to stand fast in the open profession thereof, and if the multitude of the world rise vp against it and condemne it: yet let vs be faithfull euen vnto death, for there can be no greater honor, then this that he saith, My faithfull martyr.

Hitherto we haue seene the commendation of the Angell and Church in Pergamus: now followeth their reproofe in the matter for which they are rebuked of the Lord. *But I haue (saith he) a few things against thee.* This Angell then and this flocke are not without their faultes, yea their grosse blot, albeit they are the faithfull souldiers of Christ: a thing worthie to be noted, least we condemne excellent Churches for some faultes.

This is the mercie of the Lord, not to reiect the faithfull for the faultes that be in them. It is not to encourage or bolden any to committe sinnes careleslie, and to continue in the same: for that is a great presumption and contempt: but it is to comfort such as with all their hart studie vnfainedly to please the Lorde, and yet

yet are burthened stil with corrupt flesh, so that in some things they slippe a while. Their fault was, that they had them which held the doctrine of Balaam, & which held the doctrine of the Nicholaitanes.

See the differing frailties which be in Gods seruants so long as they liue here: the Angell and Church at Ephesus had declined, and left their former loue, & yet hated the workes of the Nicolaitanes, so farre that they would not suffer such a taught or held the same to remaine in their fellowship. The Angell, and Church at Pergamus, stood in their faith and loue, and although they could not but hate the doctrine of Balaam, and the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, yet they negligently suffered those spots and blots (I meane the men which held the same) to remaine among them. It seemeth that the doctrine of the Nicholaitanes, and the doctrine of Balaam was all one: but set forth vnder the name of Balaam for to make it more odious,

Touching this Balaam, ye may reade in the booke of Numbers chap. 22. and so in the chapters following. *Balake* the King of the Moabites sent for *Balaam* the soothsayer, and would hire him for to curse *Israel* for his sake: he was for rewardes sake desirous for to curse them, but letted by the Lorde, and compelled to bless them. Yet greedie of rewardes, he tooke the King and taught him how hee might procure the ruine of the children of *Israel*, and that was if they might be brought to sinne against God: for the subtile wretch did know that they could not be plagued, and brought vnder, vnles God were offended with them. Then he taught him how they might be enticed into sinne, and that was, that they should set before them the beautifull women which might allure them to fornication, and so vnto idolatrie, euen to feast with them at their idol feastes: which thing came to passe, for the children of *Israel* did commit whoredome with the daughters of *Moab*, and went to their sacrifices, and worshipped *Baalpeor*: and the wrath of the Lord was kindled, and he commaunded they should be slaine: and there fell of that plague twentie and foure thousand, Numb 25.

True it is, this counsell of *Balaam* vnto *Balake* is not set downe: but hee tolde *Balake* that hee would giue him counsell, chapter 24. verse 14. And when the thing was come to passe, *Moses* saith it was by the counsell or worde of *Balaam*, chapter 31. verse 16. And in this place the Lorde saith expresselie that *Balaam* taught *Balake* to put a stumbling blocke before the children of *Israel*, that they might eate of things offered vnto idols, and commit fornication. The Nicolaitanes taught that it was lawfull to commit fornication, and to eate of things offered to idols, and therefore hee setteth them forth to bee the disciples of *Balaam*. They taught such filthie doctrine euen for their bellies sake, and through couetousnes, and therefore Saint *Peter* and Saint *Iude* speaking of them, euen of such wicked men crept into the Church, say woe vnto them, they haue perished in the reward of *Balaam*. They be Balaamites, they teach filthines, euen to bring plagues vpon the Church. The Lord saith which thing I hate: which teacheth a lesson, not only to the Nicholaitanes, to see how abominable they were before God, but also to all such as corrupt the Church any way: for there be at this day many filthie epicures,

which like of any thing but true godlines, for that they cannot abide. If a man will not power forth himselfe vnto all excesse of riot, to gowse and sweare, and to bee filthie, they gibe at him by and by, terming him precise and one addicted to singularity, and raile vpon him with other reprochfull tearmes. Nay, if a man make but the least shew of honest conuersation, he shall be sure to heare of it that way.

Most lamentable it is to beholde these abusers of the grace of God, turning it into wantonnes, as the holy Apostle saith, in what multitudes they swarme in the Church. Their very multitude, and custome causeth them euen to prescribe as if the right were on their side. But let them looke well vpon this place, how odious a thing it is to corrupt the Church of God: the temple of God is holy and pure, and they bee blessed which seeke to establish the Christian people in all purenes, and chastitie, both of bodie and soule: and cursed are they which doe corrupt and defile, or bee occasions to bring in or to nourish pollutions, among Gods people.

Many can discourse gallantlie to proue the indifferencie of this and that action, and why may not a Christian doe it, without all consideration of the most vile and horrible abuses which are nourished and maintained by such meanes. They are very zealous to haue nothing abridged of all that they suppose is graunted for fleshlie pleasure; but for the glorie of God, and for the soules of the people, they haue no zeale nor care at all: for deale roundlie with them, and they will confesse, that in deede manyfolde euils, euen fowle sinnes doe follow in such libertie. But many of them againe haue this plaister for that, for what one thing can we doe (say they) but we sinne? Wee know there bee many euils committed: yea and yee doe laugh and sport your selues at them. The Prophet saith, that riuers of teares did descend from his eyes, because men kept not the Law of God, Psalm. 119. but yee laugh. The foole (saith *Salomon*) maketh a sport of sinne: and is it not strange, that among those which professe Christ, there should such monsters bee found, as will get in men to make them drunken, that they may laugh to see them either tumble like swine, or heare them raile and vtter all filthie speeches? O wretched dayes, the patience of God is great. These beastes shall one daye come to their account: for the Lord doth hate such filthie abominations, euen as he saith he hated the doctrine of the Nicholaitanes, Let as many as feare God, stand fast against them in the way of godlines, haue no fellowship with them in their corrupt and corrupting waies.

Beloued, this admonition is so much the more necessarie, that there bee not a few, but swarmes of corrupting Nicholaitanes in these dayes. And as yee see a mightie flood beareth downe all that standeth before it that standeth not very fast: so the generall streame of their carnall impieties carrieth all such away, as are not strongly armed with the feare of God.

The Lord hauing set downe the faulte which was in this Church: now he calleth for repentance: *Repent* sayth he. Then the godly are to repent: yea that they are, for the most godly that liue are but in the way to perfection: and so haue somewhat daylie to amend, and repent for. They are to pray so long as they liue, Forgiue vs our trespasses: many so soone as euer they haue receiued the profession of the gospell, will let loose of their grafted sinnes, imagine that they be ioly christians, neuer stu-

lying

dying to reforme daylie the euill affections and corrupt lustes of their harts, and so in tyme they wither away and come to naught. Again, our nature is ready to swell, and euen to challenge priuiledges and liberties, if wee haue indured any assaults for the gospell: I was persecuted, (saith one) I was imprisoned, I was banished, I was spoyled of all my goods. Now tell him of repentance if hee walke in some grosse sinnes, and he thinketh ye offer him great wrong: as if the former sufferings had giuen euē a full libertie. This Angel of the Church at Pergamus had stood in the battaile, and so had the flocke, there was one fault among them, and the Lord willet them to repent. And out of all controuersie if wee haue stood in time of affliction and persecution raised against the trueth, it maketh much against vs, if afterward we be ouercome of the world, For hauing found the strength of God to vphold vs in aduersitie, in persecution and terror, if wee gaue not ouer our selues in carelesse securitie of the flesh, should not the same power preserue vs in time of peace and prosperitie, from being ouercome with the loue of this world? And being ouercome, what a fall haue we taken? Alas shall wee glorie in a fall? Shall wee glorie in that, whereof we ought to be much ashamed? O let vs repent, as the Lord here requireth, for that which is amisse in vs, whatsoeuer we are, or whatsoeuer wee haue been.

After this admonition to repentance, here is added a threatning conditional, that is, if thou doe not; for if he repented, there should come no harme: but if not, marke what he threatneth, *I will come vnto thee shortly, and will fight against them with the sworde of my mouth.* The Lord Iesus is saide to come diuers waies: hee is saide to come to succour his when they bee in distresse: but here hee saith hee will come vnto battaile, and will fight against that wicked crue, euen with that sharpe two edged sworde, which proceedeth out of his mouth. This is his mightie worde, by which hee will slaye all the wicked. But hee telleth the Angell of this Church, that he will fight against them, against those Nicholaitanes, which taught to committe fornication and idolatrie, who as Saint *Peter* saith, had eyes full of adulterie, that could not cease to sinne, beguyling vnstable soules: he doth not say he would fight against him or against the Church: yea but we see this is a threatning against him and the Church, and therefore the Lordes fighting against the Nicholaitanes includeth some punishment, also euen against him, and against so many of the flocke, as did not so much shun them as they ought to doe. For it is not enough for vs to condemne wicked heresies and vnclane vices, but the men which are guiltie in them, ought to be cast forth and auoyded, the Church must be purged and ridde of them. For how can such be suffered without a great sinne against almighty God? Especially when the sufferance is not only a prophanatio of most holy things, as the giuing of them, that is, the holy Sacraments vnto dogs & swine: but the weake are seduced and corrupted. Thus much for the narration of this epistle, now to the conclusion.

Let him that hath an eare, heare what the spirite saith to the Churches. This we haue had in the two former epistles, and not in vaine repeated, for wee are dull of hearing, and neede to bee stirred vp with often admonition. And seeing wee shall bee conquerors through faith, it behoueth vs for to heare, vnles wee will bee ouer-

come. Wee haue the diuell and all that he can make against vs, yea euen our owne corrupt harts, but yet through hearing, we shall get the the victorie, wee shall stand fast, euen vnto the end, and all finished, we shall stand. Then shall wee obtaine the precious promises which are made: as here follow some. The first is, *to him that ouercommeth will I giue to eate Manna that is hid.* Wee knowe how the scripture doth set forth, that God fed the children of Israel fortie yeares in the wilderness with Manna. Whereof it is saide in the Psalme, that man did eate the bread of Angels: for that bread which was brought vnto them by the ministrie of Angels, is called the bread of Angels, as wee call ours the bakers bread. This Manna serued vnto a further vse then to feede the bellic, for it was a Sacrament, or a figure of the true bread of life, the Lord Iesus, who is that bread of life which came downe from Heauen, Iohn 6. That Manna which the fathers did eate in the wilderness, was visible vnto all: but this true Manna is hid, none can come nigh it, none can see it, none can taste of it, but such as haue a true and liuely faith. They all indeede which belecue shall receiue somewhat of it, euen as it were some morsels thereof in this life present, (which are sufficient to make them liue) and in the life to come, they shall bee most plentifully filled, and fed thereof with continuall delight: for it is not as our daintie meates, which when wee are full wee loath: but the sweete taste continueth still for euer more. Blessed are they which hunger for this heavenly Manna, as they cannot but long for it, which once doe trulie taste it: for all the sweete dainties in this worlde are but as drasse vnto it. Let vs then fight to the end that wee may come to this heavenly delicate banquet. Souldiers fight to get somewhat to liue on, to fare well, and to maintaine a countenance here vpon the earth: and shall not we fight to come to this heavenly table?

The other promise here made vnto the conquerors, *I will giue him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth but he that receiueth it.* It is out of question that vnder diuers figures the Lord doth promise to his faithfull souldiers, the same reward, the same dignitie, felicitie and glory, according as diuers things may represent it vnto vs: as here by the white stone & the new name written in it, which none knoweth but he which receiueth the same, the remission of sins, the sanctification, the iustification, the peace of conscience, & ioye of the holy ghost, yea all the spiritual graces, and the dignity which followeth with them, seeme to be here resembled. The conquerors were wont to haue such things giuen vnto them as might be apparant figures vnto others of their worthines: but here he saith, that the name is knowne to none but to him that receiueth it. This is not so to be taken, as though the glorie and honor of the faithfull shall be hid or secret from the sight of others: but the ioy and consolation, and peace, are felt onely of him that hath them, and none can be partaker with him. Thus much touching

the message to the Angell of the Church at Pergamus.

The



The seuenth Sermon.

18. *And vnto the Angell of the Church which is at Thyatira write, these things saith the sonne of God, which hath his eyes like vnto a flame of fire, and his feete like fine brasse.*
19. *I know thy workes, and thy loue, and seruice, and faith and thy patience, and thy workes, and the last are more then the first.*
20. *Notwithstanding I haue a few things against thee, that thou sufferest the woman Ie.abel, which calleth her selfe a prophetisse, to teach, & to deceiue my seruants, to make them commit fornication, and to eate meates sacrificed vnto Idols:*
21. *And I gaue her space to repent of her fornication, and she repented not.*
22. *Beholde I will cast her into a bed, and them that committe fornication with her into great affliction, except they repent them of their workes:*
23. *And I will kill her children with death: and all the Churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the raines and harts: and I will giue vnto euery one of you according to your workes.*
24. *And vnto you I say, the rest of them of Thyatira, as many as haue not this learning, neither haue knowne the deepenes of Satan (as they speake) I will put vpon yee none other burden.*
25. *But that which ye haue already, hold fast till I come.*
26. *For he that ouercommeth, and keepeth my workes vnto the end, to him will I giue power ouer nations:*
27. *And he shall rule them with a rod of Iron: and as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken.*
28. *Euen as I receiued of my father, so will I giue vnto him the morning starre.*
29. *Let him that hath an eare, heare what the spirite saith to the Churches.*



He fourth message is sent to the Pastor of the Church at Thyatira, a citie of Lydia. The entrance is as in the former, from the great Lord of glorie, the sonne of God: hee noteth himselfe by one part of the vision in which he shewed his glorie in the former chapter, as namely *That his eyes are as a flame of fire, and his feete like fine brasse.* For (as I haue fundrie times noted) by this one they might consider of all the rest: seeing there is none whose eyes pearce through and with cleere sight beholde all secrets,

nor

nor that hath such strength, such stedfastnes and perfection in his waies, but onely that mightie redeemer, our Lord Iesus Christ.

Then he sayth in the second part, which is the narration, I know thy works. This we see he sayth vnto all: and this is peculiar to him; and he can giue due praise, and a iust reproofe, neither more nor lesse then euery one deserueth. There is no pleading against him, no gain saying nor colouring of any matter. He doth first greatly commend this Angell, as his worthy seruant, and faithfull shepheard among his flocke, and so together with him the flocke is commended. The vertues which he reporteth to be in him, are generall and large, as loue, seruice, faith, patience, and workes, and the same increased: for so many steppes there be in his praise.

Touching the loue, whether we vnderstand it, the loue he did beare to Christ, or the loue he did beare to the Church, or generally of them both, it is all one in effect: seeing we can not loue the Lord Iesus, but wee must needes loue his Church, neither can we loue his Church, except we loue him first. These goe inseparably together: and therefore we must take it that he loued God, he loued Christ, he loued the Gospell, he loued the Church. He was not voyd (as ye see) of that which Saint Paul, 1. Cor. 13. sheweth, if it be wanting, al other things are but a vaine shew. His faith was the true and lively faith, which (as the same Apostle sayth) worketh by loue. If a man bee neuer so full of knowledge, and seeme to haue neuer so much faith, and haue not loue, he knoweth nothing as he ought to know, hee is in darkenes, his faith (which in some sense the scripture calleth faith, as 1. Iam. 2.) is not faith properly, and in deed, but a dead image and resemblance of faith: therefore stil I say we are put in mind to excell and to abound in loue. Vnto this his loue the Lord ioyneth his seruice, that is his ministerie, euen all the labours, and duties which he performed to the Saints in teaching and otherwise, and so all the seruice of the Saintes and their labours of loue in their place, following the steppes of their pastor. This is very well ioyned vnto loue, as the fruite thereof: For as Christ said to Peter, *Lo-uest thou me? feed my sheepe, feede my lambes.* And as that chosen vessell Paul, taking exceeding great paines, induring many troubles, and running through manie daungers to feede the Church, seeming vnto some to bee as a man either out of his wittes, or vainglorious, rendreth the right cause, saying, The loue of Christ constraineth vs, 2. Cor. 5.

So euery true minister of Christ, beholding what loue the Lord hath shewed towards vs, and how deere his Church is vnto him, with how great a price he hath redeemed it: can not but louing him, bee thrust forward by that loue, to performe (though it be painefull and dangerous) all the duties of their ministerie, in feeding, strengthening, and comforting the weake and tender lambes of Christ. And euery faithfull man feeling the loue of God, doth loue him againe, and thereupon laboureth to doe all the seruice hee can. If a man take neuer so much paines and trauaile in studie, in teaching, or in whatsoever, if it proceede not from this loue, but either to seeke gaine, or glorie, (as I noted also before) all his ministerie to himselfe before God is nothing worth. I say to himselfe, because it may profit the Church:

but

but hee shall receiue no reward with God. The sincere seruice doth proceede from loue: and so we see it here commended in this holy Bishop. It is certaine that such as be loose and negligent in seruice of Christ and his Church, it is because they neuer felt the loue of God, and so doe not loue him.

Then next his faith is set downe, and with it his patience: here may seeme to be no good order obserued for this. We know that loue is the fruite of faith, and followeth of it, as I noted before, that Saint Paul sayth, Faith worketh by loue. It is so then as faith is to haue the first place: but our Sauour would commend the ministerie of this his seruant, before he would praise the patience in the same, & therefore setteth loue in the first place. There is no mention of wicked men, as of Iewes or such aduersaries in this citie, but yet you may perceiue the deuill wanted not his instrument, (as indeed he wanteth them no where in the world) for this man was withstood, and so were the people, and indured great troubles, and therefore his patience is commended. If he had not bene troubled, what patience could there be? If his troubles and afflictions had not bene great, what neede there any mention of his faith, by which he bare them? For it is sayd, *Thy faith and patience.* A man euen by humane courage can beare much: but the afflictions, the troubles, the reproches, and dangers of this man were such, as that he could not haue borne them, but being armed with the heauenly power of God through faith. Wee may not thinke that the deuill being so madde, and full of wrath as he is, where his kingdom decayeth, would suffer any such seruant of Christ to passe without great assaults. For doubtlesse he that will serue the Lord Iesus indeede, let him be armed, and that with the power of God through faith, for he shall be assaulted, his patience shall be tryed, and tryed againe. If we haue faith we shall stand as this man stood, and neuer be ouerthrowen. But if we want faith, wee can not but fall in the great assaults.

Now further, this faith and loue of his could not be without many good works, yea many sweet and pleasant fruites, and therefore he againe sayth, *and thy workes.* This man was a branch in the vine which bare fruite, Ioh. 15. The Christians taught by him abounding in faith and loue were fruitfull. And he is commended that hee grew more and more fruitfull, and they together with him. For he sayth, *The last are more then the first.* This is a great commendation, and a very rare thing to bee found. For albeit God require that we should grow vp in Christ dayly, and become better and better, fuller of faith, of loue, and of all good works, as he sayth, *As new borne babes conet the sincere milke of the word, that ye may growe thereby:* 1. Pet. 2. yet very few doe it, but wee shall find many euery where which with the Angell of the Church of Ephesus forsake their former loue, and doe not their first workes, and marke what followeth. God did threaten the Church of Ephesus, for the Church did decline and decay with their Bishop in forsaking their former loue. Yea he did threaten them with a fore threatening, that if they did not repent, he would remoue their candlesticke out of the place. Here was also a fault in this pastour, but yet no such seuer or sharpe threatening against the Church, which did growe better and better: what is the reason? Surely the Lord is so highly pleased where men that be-

leeue

leeue are going for ward though it be slowly, yea euen but creeping, that hee beareth with great infirmities. He that is declining and forsaking his former loue, of a forward man may soone come farre behind and fall into a daungerous estate, (yea many fall quickly, and neuer rise againe) but he that is going forward and doth become better and better, in faith, in loue, and good workes, though he be laden and compassed about with infirmities, and some grosse sinne appeare, yet in time hee groweth to be a very good man. For what sayth Christ, *Every branch in mee that beareth fruite, he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruite.* Ioh. 15 Let vs then I pray ye for Gods sake, studie to goe forward, and take heede of backsliding. Yee see in one Church the going backward, and how it is disliked: and in an other the going forward, and how it is commended; no seuerer threatning against their fault, for they are growing better.

There is but one vniuersall Church, euen one spouse of Christ, but I pray you marke the varietie of the true members thereof, while they bee here in this worlde not vnburdened of this corrupt flesh. For here ye see one part decaying and waxing worse, and an other growing better. He that seemeth to be aloft and most excellent coming downward, is in worse case then he that is below climbing upward. Now commeth the reprehension, or the fault which is found in this man and his flocke.

Notwithstanding I haue a few things against thee, &c. I noted before that the Lord findeth nothing to bee reproofed in the Angell of the Church of Smyrna: not that he was perfect, or free from all faults, (which is not to bee found in any that liueth) but he had no grosse offence: So here when he saith, *I haue a few things against thee:* It is not to be vnderstood that the frailties and imperfections of this holy man, and of the faithfull in that Church were fewe, but that there were a few grosse things in him & in the. We see the Lord doth testifie for him that he did grow better and better, both he and the people: but yet he had this foule fault in him, that contrarie vnto all good order of discipline hee suffered a most vile and wicked woman to teach filthie doctrine in the Church, and therewith to seduce the weake seruants of God. The doctrine which she taught, is the same which before hee called the doctrine of *Baaliam*, to cate of things offered vnto Idols, and to commit fornication. It is (as we may learne euery where by Saint *Paul*) a great commendation for the pastor to beare meekely and patiently many infirmities in the flocke, both for differences in some poyntes of doctrine, as also in manners; also to beare with forward men, and to suffer patiently: but to suffer such abominable poison as this to bee poured forth and spread among the saints of God, euen to the polluting of the Church, to the reproch of the holy faith, and extreme danger of the weake, was as I sayd before, a foule fault. The good man and the whole flocke or the most of them, in this thing were ouer gentle and too patient. The Lorde calleth this wicked woman *Iesabell*, (not that her name was so) whether it were but one woman, or diuers, but to shew how odious and accursed she was in his sight, whatsoeuer she pretended, she was like *Iesabell*, & eue no better. For *Iesabell* was the wife of *Ahab*, King of Israel: And as she drew on *Ahab* vnto most horrible idolatrie, as she with-

stood

stood and persecuted the Lords holy prophets; as shee kept a table for foure hundred false prophets of *Baal*, and was euen as an head of false prophets, a ringleader and mistresse of all filthines, euen cursed *Iesabell*. So this filthie woman called her selfe a prophetesse, and would be a great doer in the Church, as if shee had vttered all her doctrine by the reuelation of the holy Ghost, when as in very deede she had it from the deuill himselfe. For so the craftie deuill hath at all times, to purchase credite to his abominable wares, and to make them saleable, set them forth vnder the name and authoritie of the holy Ghost: For if hee should offer them as coming out of his owne shoppe, men would then take heede of them. She was a prophetesse of the deuill, but she boasted of the holy Ghost. This hath bene the whole sleight of the poperie, the Pope can not erre, he sitteth in Peters chaire, looke whatsoeuer hee decreeth, it is from the holy ghost. Thus I say haue all the most filthie dregs of poperie bene greedily drunke vp of the blind worlde, because the wicked deuill hath broched them vnder the name and authoritie of the holy Ghost. And marke a little the comparison betweene these two. This woman called her selfe a prophetesse, but Christ termeth her *Iesabell*. The Pope of Rome, chalengeth to be the head of the Church, but the scripture termeth him Antichrist. So that we must not looke what such seducers terme themselves, for they will take glorious titles, but what Gods word sheweth them to be.

Now the Lord proceedeth to denounce Iudgement, that if she and her followers could not be reclaimed, yet others might thereby take warning. First, the Lord doth declare his long suffering, which she abused. *I gaue her space* (sayth he) *to repent of her fornication, but she repented not.* This was a great kindnes of God, to call such horrible sinners to repentance, and to giue them time and space to repent. Wee see hee doth to at this day vnto many: but they take occasion thereby (as the Lord chargeth them, Psalm. 50.) to bee more bolde in their wickednes, euen as if God did allow of their wayes, because he doth not speedily strike them down with plagues. But his plagues will bee the more grievous, that his kindnes is so abused, and that he giueth time to repent, and they waxe worse. For marke what hee saith here, *Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and those that commit fornication with her, into great affliction, except they repent them of their workes.* And I will kill her children with death. Here is vtter destruction and wrath denounced, the speech indeed being applied according to the matter. For because fornicators delight in beds to commit their sinne, the Lord sayth hee will cast this woman into a bed, and her lovers with her, and this he expoundeth to be great affliction. This is not to bee restrained to afflictions in this world, but without repentance, they should haue this bed euen in hell. Which is also to be vnderstoode, when he sayth hee will slay her children with death. No doubt the second death should deuour these children of fornication. And the execution of this iudgement shall bee made so manifest, that (as hee saith) *All the Churches shall knowe, that I am hee which searcheth the reins, and the hearts: and I will giue vnto euery one of you according to your workes.* The iudge of all the worlde, which must iudge vprightly, and render to euery one according

according to his works, must know the secret thoughts and intents of all hearts, and that doth Christ Iesus, as he pronounceth here.

And it is to bee marked how hee can and will distinguish and seuer those which are mingled together in the Church, while it is in the world. For this wicked *Iezabel* with her children that shee brought forth by her abominable doctrine, were mixed among the Saints: but Christ will part them asunder, and for their wicked workes they shall bee cast into hell: and the other which haue not consented vnto that wicked doctrine, nor beene defiled with those foule workes, but haue held the pure doctrine and faith of Christ, and brought forth the good fruites of the same, shall be rewarded with glory in the heauens.

This is a thing worthy our consideration. It is indeed a comfortable thing: For as it shall not profit the wicked at all, that they haue a place in the Church, and are mixed for a time with the godly, (seeing they shall be plucked out and receiue according to their workes) so shall it be no damage to the true beleeuers, which keepe themselves vndefiled from their filthie pollutions, that such vncleane swine remaine with them in the bosome of the Church. True it is that the Church and the Gospell are much disgraced, and lye subiect vnto great reproch, when such foule monsters are suffered to harbour among the people of God, yea many are defiled & endangered by them, and therefore the pastors and Church gouernours doe sin a great sinne, (as we see by that which is reprobued in this Angel) when they be negligent, and doe not their best to purge and cleanse the Lords house, and keep it from being defiled with such doing. Shall they not care how the gospell be dishonoured, shall they not be grieved to see the weake seduced? But yet we may also learne here, that the godly are not thereby defiled, which consent not vnto such wickednes. The Lord Iesus speaketh kindly vnto them, not blaming them that they did not separate themselves from that societie and communion where so horrible persons were suffered to remaine by the fault of the teachers and gouernours. For he sayth, *And vnto you (I say) the rest of Thyatira, which haue not this learning, neither haue knowne the deepenes of Satan, (as they speake) I will put vpon yee none other burden.* These whom he calleth the rest of Thyatira, are they which did abhorre that filthie doctrine of that *Iezabel*, and did hold constantly the holy faith of Christ. He sayth he will lay no further burthen vpon them: Hee doth not charge them as men defiled for communicating in that Church, in which so foule an abuse was suffered. He denounceth no terror against them: he doth not charge them to take heede, and hereafter if their Bishop and guides that then were, or any other that should succede, did permit such abuse among them, to depart away and to separate themselves, least they should all thereby be defiled. He doth not I say, lay any such burden vpon them: for that would make much for Donatisme, but hee onely willet whatsoeuer fall out, *that which ye haue alreadie hold fast till I come:* stand fast in the holy and pure, and sound faith which ye haue receiued.

Beloued in the Lord, marke this saying well, for that which is spoken vnto these, is spoken vnto vs all. It cometh to passe, and that not seldome in the true Church of Christ, where the sound faith is taught, that there spring vp fowle heresies, wicked

ked opinions, and abominable deedes. It falleth out also, that the gouernours and pastors are negligent, and doe not cast them forth, their fault is here rebuked, when hee saith, I haue a few things against thee, that thou sufferest that wicked woman *Iezabel*, &c. But Christ layeth no commaundment vpon thee to depart out of that companie, neither dooth hee threaten thee as a man polluted, by the open sinnes of others: but willet thee to holde fast to the ende, the truth, and not to consent vnto that which is fowle, either in doctrine or manners. If (I say) hee layde no other burden vpon the rest of Thyatira, he layeth no other burden vpon vs, but that we holding the trueth, keepe our selues vnpolluted from such abominations as are permitted, euen in the Church.

But there is some darkenes in these wordes, when hee saith, *That haue not this learning, neither haue knowne the deepenes of Satan (as they speake) &c.* The learning which he speaketh of, was the doctrine of that *Iezabel*, that false prophetesse, which she taught, and whereby she seduced some to eate of things offered to idols, and to commit fornication: those which reiected it, are said not to haue it. Moreover, this *Iezabel* which called her selfe a Prophetesse, and the rest which were the chiefe teachers of that doctrine, boasted of very high mysteries, and deepe poyntes, reckoning them but as dullards, which did not receiue the same, & as men of so shallow capacitie, that they could not reach vnto the deepenes of matters. They, doubtles, boasted of a deepenes from the spirite of God, but the Lord calleth it the deepenes of Satan: and yet saith, as they speake, euen because they called it a deepenes. For so yee shall finde, that when heretikes, or men which come with strange and vaine speculations if they be not receiued, they say it is because of the depth of the diuine matters, which such dull heads cannot reach vnto. But as yee see the Lorde doth scorne them, and tearmeth it in deede a deepenes, but yet the deepenes of Satan. In deede hee is deepe in his kinde to deceiue proude loftie mindes, which despise the plaine simplicitie of Gods trueth deliuered in the holy Scriptures. And what was the deepenes of Satan in this prophetesse, to seduce to such abomination? It is not to bee doubted, but that the doctrine of the Nicholaitanes, the doctrine of *Balaam*, or of this *Iezabel*, was the same which those abominable cursed men held that were crept into the Church, whom Saint *Peter* and Sainte *Inde* doe so painte out, and warne men to take heede of. Yee see there were fine wittes among the Corinthians, which could take vpon them to defend the feasting with idolaters in the idoll Temples, with the meates offered to idols. And though the Apostles withstood them, yet some euery where grew more peruerse, and increased by the helpe of the deuill, euen by his suggestions, the subtil cauls, by which they made, either that eating meates offered to idols, seemed lawfull, or the bodily fornication, and such like, for verelie all their deepenes was to proue that they were not defiled by their actions in those sinnes.

This broode continued in the Church, and no doubt in the Valentinians; wee may see what this deepenes of Satan was. For *Irenaeus* in his first booke, and first chapter, describeth their manners, and also declareth the chiefe reasons whereby they

they vttered the deepenes of Sathan in prouing it lawfull to commit such things. They called themselves (as hee reporteth) spirituall, as hauing the perfect knowledge of God. Such in the Church as receiued not their doctrine, they called natural, and not hauing perfect knowledge. To those that are naturall, they held it of necessitie to saluation, to haue good workes, otherwise vnpossible to be saued: But they themselves as they boasted being spirituall, they could not (as they sayd) but be saued, in what actions soeuer they walked: for they held it impossible for that which is spirituall to receiue any corruption, in or by what workes soeuer. For prooffe they vsed this comparison: that as golde in the mire dooth not lose the bewtie, but keepeth still the proper nature, the mire dooing no harme to the golde: euen so they saide, that they in whatsoeuer materiall actions they were conuersant, they were not hurt at all, nor lost their spirituall substance. Hereupon (as *Irenaeus* saith) they durst do any thing which is forbidden: they did eate of thing offered to idols, making no difference, thinking they were not thereby polluted. And when the Pagans made feastes in honour of their idols, they were euen of the first that came thither, as he reporteth. Also among other horrible factes, he sheweth of their vncleannes with women, euen where soeuer they lusted, if they could seduce them, to draw them from their husbands: fornication or whoredome could not defile them that had so deepe knowledge, and were become spirituall. This is the deepenes of Sathan, this is the mysticall diuinitie of that *Iezabel*: carnall men could not, nor cannot vnderstand this learning: these mysteries are about the reach of the common sort.

Now as Sathan laide the foundation of this his deepe diuinitie in the Apostles times, which he afterward did further builde vp by the Valentinians and others, so in these last times, so soone as euer the light of the gospel brake forth, hee set it on foote againe by the Anabaptists, Lybertines, Familie of Loue, and other such monsters: for they boast of such deepenes of illumined elders, and men deified, that looke whatsoeuer they committed, euen the foulest deeds, yet they sinne not. Many are offended at this daye, that such things spring vp with the preaching of the Gospel, and take occasion thereby to slander and deface it: but why doe they not also condemne the preaching of the Apostles, seeing the holy Scriptures doe thus plainely witnes, that such things followed them? The wicked papists know right well how it began in the time of the Apostles, and how shortly after the Churches euery where were grievously rent and tormented, by such monstrous heretikes and most filthie persons, and yet they are not ashamed to obiect it as a most vile reproach against vs, that heretikes doe spring vp, where the gospel is preached. But let them consider whom they reproach: euen the holy Churches of olde, euen the holy Apostles, and the Lord himselfe. Wee may not take it to be no true gospel, no right preaching, or no godlie Churches, where such horrible and most vile things spring vp, but rather acknowledge and confesse, that it is the same gospel which is now preached, and the right catholike Church, which Satan seeketh to deface, euen as he did in olde time.

If

If wee thinke the diuell bee still like himselfe, why should we not looke for his working and practises against the gospel to bee the same that they were in olde time? When yee thinke of these things that grew vp in the Churches, and followed the preaching of the Gospel, euen in the times of the blessed Apostles, let it arme you against all the damnable heresies, sects, and schismes, which follow the sincere preaching; and likewise bee not seduced nor discouraged, by the blasphemous railings of the Papists, which charge the most holy and heauenly doctrine of the gospel, to be the seede of all heresies and errors, and tumults. For it is the diuell which soweth all the euill seede, and then setteth them, I meane Papists and Atheists, a worke, to exclaime, as hee did set the heathen a worke in olde time, against Gods truth, and his faithfull people, as if the faulte were in the doctrine. This packing of the diuell, many of the Papists doe knowe well enough, and yet are content to gratifie him: for they dare not saye the Apostles or their doctrine was the cause of such abominable things of olde. And why should they thinke it the cause now? It is malice, it is malice, which carieth them headlong, let vs stand fast, and despise it.

Now follow the promises to the conquerors, by which wee may bee encouraged to fight valiantlie against the diuell and all his armies: He that ouercommeth (saith hee) then adding, and keepeth my workes vnto the end. The workes of God are holy workes, and here set against the filthie workes of the disciples of that wicked *Iezabel*, which boasted of such deepenes of knowledge. The diuell labored to draw as many as hee could to follow their workes, whome hee by that false prophetisse of his had seduced: and the Lorde promiseth him life, blessednes, dignitie and glorie, that shall stand constant in his waies against them, and against all other euill waies, euen to the end: for he onely getteth the victorie which continueth to the end. If a man bee overcome, though not in the beginning, nor in the midst of his race, but euen towards the latter ende, what is he the better that hee ranne or fought at all? Hath hee not lost all his former labour? Let vs therefore take heede, and bee carefull to bee stedfast in loue and zeale of the truth to the end. Wee see many that are but as a morning dewe, or as apples that are blasted so soone as they bee out of the blossome, and so fall downe. Again we see, that there be some, that after long time, doe wither away and rotte, as fruites that hang too long vpon the trees: the warning therefore is very needefull which the Lorde giueth in this place.

Then followe the promises to him that ouercommeth, the first in these wordes, To him will I giue power ouer nations, and hee shall rule them with a rod of Iron, and as the vessels of a potter shall they bee broken. These speeches the holy Ghost vseth to set forth the rule and power which Christ shall haue ouer nations, by which he shall breake downe all the force of his enemies, and raigne ouer them, *Psalme 2*. And then that all his chosen which in him, and by him get the victorie, shall bee partakers of his kingdome, and raigne with him: which is meant by these speeches here vttered. The other promise is in these words, As I receiued of my father, so will I giue him the morning starre. Christ in his man-

G

hood

hood receiued all things of the father to communicate with vs: therefore as hee is the bright morning star, full of all true and glorious light, so al the faithfull in him shall be made shining starres. Let vs then neuer fainte in tribulation for the gospel, seeing our victorie shall be with so great glorie. We are now full of darkenes, albeit we haue the sunne of righteousnes shining vpon vs, and giuing vs light: but then all darkenes and corruption shall be abolished out of vs, and the brightnes of God shall be vpon vs: therefore he willeth againe, *Let him that hath an eare, heare what the spirite saith to the Churches.*



The eight Sermon.

CAP. 3.

1. *And vnto the Angell of the Church which is at Sardis, write, these things saith he that hath the seuen spirites of God, and the seuen starres, I knowe thy workes: for thou hast a name that thou liuest, but thou art dead.*
2. *Be awake, and strengthen the things which remaine, that are readie to die: for I haue not found thy workes perfect before God.*
3. *Remember therefore how thou hast receiued and heard, and holde fast and repent. If therefore thou wilt not watch, I will come on thee as a theefe, and thou shalt not know what hower I will come vpon thee.*
4. *Yet thou hast a few names in Sardis, which haue not defiled their garments: and they shall walke with me in white, for they are worthie.*
5. *He that ouercommeth shall be clothed in white aray, and I will not put out his name, out of the booke of life, but I will confesse his name before my father, and before his Angels.*
6. *Let him that hath an eare, heare what the spirite saith vnto the Churches.*



He fift message, is sent to the Angell of the Church at Sardis. This Sardis was a very famous citie, in which (as writers report) the Kings of Lydia kept their courtes, and in it now the King of Kinges had set his throne. The entrance of this message, is also from the person of Christ, as *Thus saith hee that hath the seuen spirites of God, and the seuen starres*: that is, hee who hath the holy Ghost, whose manifolde giftes hee sent downe vpon the Churches, as he promised his Apostles, that he would be-fore hee ascended, send them the comforter. It is hee which vseth the ministerie of men.

me in the building of his Church. The Angell of this Church, and with him the most of his flocke, were in a very weake case touching spirituall life, and needed the quickning of this spirite to put them in minde hereof, hee taketh this with some part of the vision, *Thus saith he that hath the seuen spirites of God.* Also he that hath the seuen starres in his hand, is that great Lorde who buildeth vp his Church by the ministerie of men. This was good also for him to consider that he might remember he had the place of a starre, and indeuour to performe his office.

In the narration he telleth him, *I know thy workes*: but alas how poore were his workes? how poore were the works of the flocke? For here is no commendation giuen vnto him at all. He is dispraised or discommended, hee is admonished to awake & to repent, & he is threatned grievously if he do not acmde, euen with a terrible threatning. In deede his dispraise is set downe in few words, as thus, (*Thou hast a name that thou liuest, but thou art dead.*) But it is a discommendation very great and grievous: for hee was a minister, or ministers of Christ, a shepherde, yea a Christian, rather in some shew, and outwarde account before men, then in deede, & in truth before God: & so were the most of the flocke, as we shall see afterward, but as dead. For when he sayth, thou hast a name that thou liuest, what is it? But as if hee had sayd, thou hast the roome, and office, and account among the Churches of one that hath receiued the true faith, and so is ingrafted into mee, and made partaker of my life, yea of one that is a minister of the same grace of life vnto others, but thou art dead. What a terrible message was this vnto him from heauen? And how farre doth hee differ from the Angell of the Church of Smyrna? and with him how farre did the flocke differ from those Smyrneans? For as it was a singular comfort vnto him to haue his ministerie so fully approued, and his sheepe so praised by the Lord from his glory, that hee reprehended nothing at all in him and them: so must it needs strike this man as a terrible thunderbolt, that he is so deeply disallowed as that no one thing is commended in him. These then may stand as contraries. If all the ministers of Christ and all Churches at that time in the worlde had giuen such sentece against him, it could not haue had such force, nor haue strook so deep, as coming from Christ in his glorie. For we see how men can flatter themselves, and take it they haue great wrong offered them, when any thing is vttered against them by men, which is sharpe, though it be from the manifest word of God, such is mans hypocrisie. Yea we shall see them rouse vp themselves as if they were euen of the best and most faithfull ministers of Christ, being nothing lesse, and euen enter into compar' on with the best. But here is no gain saying, here is no colouring, he knoweth him throughly, both within and without, which sendeth him this message, and telleth him what he is. No doubt this was a great mercie shewed to this man, and to that flocke, if they did so take it, and repent to be told thus from heauen, but we haue the same. It may seeme to bee peculiar onely to this one man, or to this one Church, in effect vnto all such as hee was, seeing the Lord will not nor can not, if he should send vnto vs now from heauen, pronounce any thing disagreeing from that which he hath set downe in his word. And let euery one that is in the office of the ministerie, and that professeth the Gospell bee sure of this, that as this

Lord knoweth his workes, so in whatsoeuer, either in his heart, or in his outward deedes, they swarue from the holy word, he shall heare the same at the day of iudgment, that this man had sent vnto him, I meane according to the measure of his fault. It were best for vs in deed to heare it now, and repent euen from the bottome of our hearts, but as I say, we are so full of hypocrisie, wee can set such a face and so boulder out all matters, that although our workes testifie against vs that wee be far worse then this man was, yet we beare our selues in hand that all is well. This man did professe the sound doctrine of the Gospell, hee taught the people in some sorte the way of God, his life was not notoriously euill or spotted with grosse vices. For if any of these had beene wanting, howe could it here haue beene omitted? howe should hee haue had a name that hee liued? or howe could hee haue beene suffered to continue in his place? for shall we thinke that the Churches euen then exercised no discipline to cleanse the ministerie? It is a cleere case then, that if a man that doth teach, and that cannot be detected of grosse finnes, but is thought to liue an vpright life, is yet neuertheless dead before God, if hee haue not the power of the spirit of God in him to doe all duties of a sincere zeale and loue of Christ, and not for an outward order and fashion. Then those shall lesse escape iudgement that haue not so much as an outward shew of goodnes: That be so farre from hauing a name among true Christians that they liue, that euen the ignorantest people can rightly discern and say, their workes be not the workes of true ministers of Christ: we see they be whoremongers, drunkards, quarrellers, common dicers, and such like.

The Lord Iesus Christ hauing thus layde open vnto him his estate, and so the estate of the people there, now giueth him admonition and warning, and them also to repent. *Bee awake* (sayth he) *and strengthen the things that remaine which are readie to die.* We see how our Sauour and his Apostles doe teach vs in many places, that it behooueth al Christians to watch, for we are in the midst of cruell enemies which seeke to spoyle vs of all heavenly treasures, and to deuour vs. And of all other, the pastors and guides of the Church are called vpon for the same thing, I say to be watchfull. They be after a peculiar sort called watchmen: And this shepheard was fallen fast a sleepe, yea euen into a dead sleepe, and into such securitie that the devils had almost stript his soule, and bereft him and the greatest part of his flocke, of all graces and life: And that little which was left, was euen dying and withering away. O most miserable condition, could such a man get the place of a Bishop in the primitive Church? Out of doubt this man had great giftes in him both of knowledge and zeale; at the least of zeale in shew, when he was first chosen into the place, to be the pastor in that Church: for the Churches at that time, when they ordayned pastors, had either some Apostle, or Euangelist, or some excellent men to direct them, and so farre as they could deeme, they chose the very best and fittest men. Whereby wee may learne not to wonder, when some men of great note, become euen as nothing, and fall almost quite away. Doe ye not see an example in this man? we may indeed iudge it most likely hee did repent, and was saued: for a man may thinke this message from heauen would awake him. But how neere the

the pits brinke was hee before this message was sent? Hee was euen as the lampe where the oyle is quite spent, sauing a maruiculous little in the wicke, which doth (as we speake) winke, and winke, and is readie to goe forth, except a newe supply of oyle be poured in. Christ doth not shew such fauour vnto euery one, as to send vnto them, and to warne them in this sort from heauen, and therefore many decline, and fall quite away. In deed there be other speciall meanes, as sharpe afflictions whereby he rouseth some out of their sleepe: and some are quickned by admonition and rebuke from godly men. But yet let men beware how they decline neuer so little and continue therein: for it is not in their owne power to recouer themselves, and all that fall doe not rise againe. Here the question may be moued, whether this be spoken of the Angell of this Church alone, or together with his flocke, as being both in one case.

I haue alreadie noted vnto yee, that the state of euery Church is set forth vnder their pastor: for the sheepe follow their shepheard. If hee be full of graces, and of the power of the spirit, the sheepe are well fed, and are in good case. If he be barren and dead, they starue also and pine away. So in this Church a fewe excepted, (as ye may see vers. 4.) they were in such a dead sleepe, that the little which remained in them, was euen readie to dye. When hee is willed therefore to bee awake and to strengthen the things which are readie to dye, it is not meant that he should looke to himselfe alone, but as the dutie of a shepheard requireth, hee is willed to looke among his sheepe. For while he was thus fallen into such a dead sleepe, the sheepe were scattered, the wolfe was broke in among them, and had made hauocke. Some went astraye, some it is like were deuoured of the wolfe, many were so bitten and torne, that scarce any life remained in them, the little which remained, was ready to die. If hee doe not now awake and bestirre him, to gather that which is gone astray, to heale that which is brused and broken, and to support and comfort the feeble, many are euen at the point to be lost. Thus much this admonition giuen vnto him importeth.

Might not the Angell of this Church haue a very heauie heart to heare that so many were endangered, and so extremely, through his securitie? and that a godlie Church was thus fallen into decaye? It is not in vaine (which now could not but enter into his mind) that the Lord God threatneth he will require the blood of his sheepe which perish through negligence, at the handes of the shepheard. If the watchman be asleepe when he should giue warning, and the sword come and deuour, it shall be vpon his head. They be in bad case then that haue such watchmen and such shepherds, but the shepherds and watchmen themselves be in worse estate: for their reckoning will be greater, the blood of all the rest which perish, shall be required at their hands.

The clause which followeth, doth expresse the whole matter further and more plainly: for it doth as it were argue the causes, by the effects. *I haue not* (saith he) *found by workes perfect before God.* This imperfection of his workes, sheweth the imperfection of that in him, from whence good workes doe spring: That is, of his faith, and so of his loue, of his zeale, of his care, and of all other spirituall graces,

for from these inward graces, doe all good workes spring. What were then the workes which were not full in him? all workes, euen the workes which euery Christian is bound vnto, and the workes of his ministerie, the workes of a shepheard in his flocke. He did preach, (for it were a most absurd thing to thinke otherwise of a pastor in those times) hee did admonish and exhort men, hee did rebuke, how else could he haue a name that hee liued? But how weakely, and how coldly was all this done? not of any feruent loue, but euen for fashion sake. He did build, but how vnperfect was his building? How farre off were the most in his flocke, from that which should be in true Christians? Alas being fallen into a dead sleepe, what good and perfect worke could he make among them? That he did was euen muchlike to a dreame. But it will bee said, whose workes bee full and perfect before God? is there any man that can haue that praise? I answer, that all mens works are in deed imperfect before God, but hee speaketh here of a further matter then of the common imperfectious which are in the best. For where there is a soundnes and sinceritie of heart, the blemishes and imperfectious are not imputed, though they bee many: but where that is wanting, though the workes may outwardly seeme before men to be many and good, yet before God it is farre otherwise: for God iudgeth mens workes to be perfect, not by the number or greatnes in outward shewe, but according to the inward affections of the heart.

Now followeth an other admoniton, *Remember therefore how thou hast receiued and heard, and hold fast and repent.* It is a great matter which is here spoken. For this pastour and this Church was taught and gathered by some one of those chiefe builders. They came with great power of the holy Ghost, and after an heavenly manner vttered and declared the diuine mysteries. And for this cause they are willed here to call to mind how they had receiued and heard, and to holde fast, and repent. Wee are then taught in this place that when wee decline, or decaye in the holy religion, it is by forgetting, and letting slip out of our minds, the doctrine and the graces which we haue heard and receiued in formertimes. There be many things that delight men, and their memorie doth holde and keepe them so fast, that they can neuer forget them if they would neuer so faine. The mysteries of God though the glory of them bee such as that our minds bee euen rauished for the time with ioy at the hearing and receiuing of them, yet how sodainly doe they slip away from vs as if there had neuer beene any such thing. This commeth partly from our owne nature, and partly from the deuill. Vaine and corrupt things doe agree with our vaine corrupt nature, and the deuill doth eftsouones suggest them: and they bee very light to carrie with vs, and slicke fast. The heavenly things are so contrarie to our affections, that for them to abide in vs is euen like fire and water put together, they be so heauie, that we waxe wearie, and the deuill doth what hee can continually to quench the light of them in our harts, and so vtterly to remoue them as that there may not so much as any print of them bee left behinde. How dangerous a thing it is to be so loose and rechelesse hearers, not onely this example, but also that terrible threatning, Hebr. 2. least at any time ye runne out, may teach vs. And now it is to be obserued, that in calling vpon him to repent, he is willed to call those for-

mer

mer things to minde, and to holde them. Is this the waye of repentance? then many goe awrie, which haue long since heard and receiued the mysteries of the Gospell, and doe heare still, but not delighted, but with some new matter. These are like the mill which is turned about dayly, but yet with new water: for the other passeth away. The Lord willet vs to keepe that which we heare, and let it be renewed dayly in vs, and so it shall haue power: For it is not the hearing, the bare vnderstanding, or delight for the present time, but the power of the doctrine remaining in vs which shall saue our soules. Therefore, although this sentence was spoken but to the Angell of one Church, yet let vs keepe it in minde: *Remember howe thou hast receiued, and heard, and hold fast, and repent.*

Here followeth now the threatning, if hee shall not repent. It is a marueilous seuerer threatning and deuouncing of wrath: *If thou wilt not watch, I will come on thee as a theefe, and thou shalt not knowe what hower I will come vpon thee.* If the good man of the house did know (sayth our Sauour in an other place) what hower the theefe would come, hee would watch and not suffer his house to bee broken vp. But the theefe watcheth his time when men be fastest on sleepe, breaketh in, killeth, and stealeth. After this manner the Lorde threatneth here, that he will come vpon this Angell of the Church at Sardis, and vpon so many of the flocke as were in his case, if they continue sleeping. Yea and hee will bee sure to find them sleeping: for he sayth, thou shalt not know at what hower I will come on thee. But for what will he come vpon him thus suddenly and vnwares? surely euen to cut him off in iudgement.

This doth shewe how much Christ Iesus is displeased with men that from care and zeale in the trueth, growe into a drouse securitie, and so bring ruine vpon his Church. And it is a notable place against those which doe so mocke and dallie, and which can so pleasantly sooth themselves in all irreligious and worldly prophanenes vpon hope of a good end. I, sayth he, (in the iolitic of his sinne, in which he is fallen into a dead sleepe) doe not care so I may haue time to call for mercy and pardon at the last when I am sicke, and perceiue I shall die. What should a man trouble himselfe that way vntill he be readie to dye? repentance shall saue a man at all times. Marke here O foolish man how Christ threatneth that he will come vpon thee like a theefe, euen while thou art a sleepe, and thou shalt not know of his comming. Art thou sure he will wake thee when he commeth? (For none but hee can wake thee out of this dead sleepe.) Nay he threatneth to come suddenly vpon thee, when thou shalt be still a sleepe, and shalt not know. Is this meant onely of sudden death? Wee see God cutteth downe euer anon one or other in all places suddenly: which might be a warning vnto euery one of vs to watch and to bee in a readines. For why may it not come vpon any one of vs as well? But what if a man be so sicke, and that many dayes, that hee seeme to be in danger of death, is hee by and by awaked out of his sleepe in sinne? nay we see many sicke, which looke not for death, and of a sudden their vnderstanding is taken away, and they are cut off. And there bee also that haue long time and looke for death, but are they euer the better, is it in their owne power to awake, to beleue, and to repent? God giueth

these giftes, and is it like such men shall haue them, which prouoke him to wrath? let not men trust to this. For the prophet in the name of the Lord willet to turne vnto him, and not to put off from day to day, because his wrath shall come suddenly, and in time of vengeance he will destroy thee. If wee desire the Lord to giue vs warning, and not to come vpon vs suddenly, as he here threatneth, because we are so full of imperfections, yet it may not be a meane to holde vs in securitie, but wee must as ye see at all times watch. These bee hard thinges which are spoken against the pastor of this Church together with his flocke: therefore here followeth some mitigation; not towards him, nor towards the multitude of that Church which were in the like case that he was: but towards those which had kept the faith, and the right way without declining. Yet (sayth hee) *Thou hast a few names at Sardis which haue not defiled their garments: and therefore they shall walke with mee in white, for they are worthie.* This not defiling of their garments is but a borrowed speech, and he meaneth that they had not polluted and spotted their soules and bodies with the filthie pollutions of sinne. But alas hee saith there were but a few of these, for the pollutions were spread ouer the body of the Church: as it can not otherwise be where the pastors and guides bee so dead in their ministrie. This is a great comfort that where there is such deadnes in the shepheard, yet the lord by some meanes or other preserueth some. There bee some godly faithfull men scattered among the multitude: and the Lord is so farre here from threatning them, as defiled with the pollutions of such as they were mixed among, and with whome they did communicate, that he promiseth them life and glorie, for that is meant by this that he sayth they shall walke with mee in white garments. And that hee sayth they are worthie, it is not meant that men can merite eternall life by their workes: but their worthines is to bee taken of a fitness, in that they were iustified in Christ as their sincere godly life did declare.

Also hee promiseth in the wordes following generally vnto every one which ouercommeth, the same thing which before, though not in the same words. First, that whosoever ouercommeth, he shall be clothed in white garments. Then this is not a thing peculiar vnto those few names in Sardis, which had not defiled their garments. All that by faith are armed with the power of Christ, and so get the victorie ouer the deuill, shall bee couered ouer with innocencie, with heavenly glorie and shining brightnes, euen as it were with a large and precious garment. These garments doe most fitly represent that righteousnes wherewith all the blessed ones shall stand clothed and couered before God: And it is not inherent righteousnes, it is not from themselues, but giuen vnto them from an other, and put vpon them: Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgien, and whose sinnes are couered: blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not his sinne, Psalm. 32. Then blessed are all those which haue these white garments put vpon them, for by them their sins are couered. Woe bee to all those that shall bee found naked and vncouered, not hauing these white garments, which stand to bee iustified not by free forgiveness of sins, or by free imputation of Christs righteousnes through faith, but by their owne workes: for albeit their deedes seeme to be many, and to bee very glorious, yet be-
fore

fore God they shall bee found nothing else, but euen as a polluted and defiled garment, yea euen like dounge.

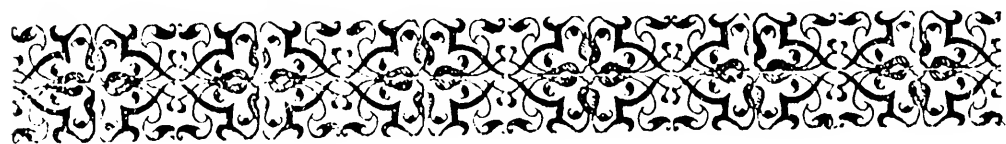
It is added further, *Neither will I put out his name out of the booke of life; but I will confesse his name before my father, and before his Angels.* These be very great and high promises: the Lord is said to haue a booke of life, in which all their names are written that shall bee saued. It is in deede but a borrowed speech from the common vse among men applied vnto our capacitie: for men cannot keepe in their memorie a great multitude of names, and therefore they vse to write the names in a booke: the Lord God needeth no such helpe, but yet to shew vnto vs the stablenes of this election, and that no one of them whom hee hath chosen can be forgotten, it is said he hath written vp and registred their names in a booke.

But the saying here vsed, may seeme to be superfluous (*I will not put out his name out of the booke of life*) seeing Gods decree is vnchangeable, and no one of Gods elect, whose names are written vp, can be blotted out: when as I say it is not possible that any one should haue his name blotted out, why or how is it saide, *Neither will I blot his name out of the booke of life?* Herein also we must learne, that our Saviour applieth his speech according vnto that which seemeth to bee so in our eyes: for when a man is an earnest professor of the gospell, and his life to mans sight framed according to the same, hee seemeth to haue his name written in the booke of life, and he for his part taketh it to bee so: now when he falleth away, becommeth an heretike, denyeth the truth in time of persecution, or falleth into wicked life, and so continueth to the end, though his name were neuer written, yet hee is saide to bee blotted out, because it is made manifest vnto men, that hee is not of that companie of which hee seemed to bee. They went out from vs (saith Saint John) because they were not of vs, for if they had beene of vs, they should haue continued with vs. But this is to manifest, that all are not of vs, 1. John 2.

In the Church of Sardis, through that deadnes of their Bishop, a great number that before time seemed to bee excellent Christians, and to haue their names written in the booke of life, had defiled their garments, and were fallen away: and that is the cause why this promise is made to the rest, *I will not put out his name out of the booke of life.* And then the contrarie to the putting out is promised in these words: *But I will confesse his name before my father, and before his Angels.* Then not to bee put out, is to bee confessed by Christ: and to be denied by Christ before his father and the Angels, is to be blotted out. It is no small matter to be accounted of, to haue Christ Iesus in his glorie confesse vs, before his father, and before the holie Angels: and if we walke worthie of the gospell, and confesse him in deede before men, he hath promised that he will doe it: and so on the contrarie part, what can be more grieuous, then to be denied of him at that day? Depart from mee yee workers of iniquitie, I knowe yee not. Though they haue cast forth diuels, and done other miracles in his name, and so were taken to be registred vp in the booke of life: yet being such as haue defiled their garments, euen workers of iniquitie, Christ will not confesse them, but blot out their names. Therefore let vs which professe the holy gospell, studie to walke in purenes of life, that Christ may acknowledge vs to be

be his true disciples. Now followeth the generall conclusion:

Let him that hath an eare, heare what the spirite saith to the Churches. The holy Ghost speaketh nothing in vaine, and therefore wee must heare not what hee hath saide to one Church, or some things that he saith, but whatsoeuer hee saith vnto all the Churches. We see what he hath said to this Church, and what a pittifull case it was in: it ought to warne all the pastors and their flockes. Would to God there were not at this day, more then one for euery seuen, both of the pastors and flockes, in as bad case, or worse then is here described. This man made some shewe, hee taught the gospell, otherwise being in that office, how should hee haue a name that he liued? Hee was not an open grosse sinner. How farre bee many from so much? The onely comfort and hope is, that the Lorde hath a fewe names among vs, that haue not defiled their garments, and for their sakes doth take pittie vpon vs.



The ninth Sermon.

7. *And vnto the Angell of the Church which is at Philadelphia, write, these things saith he which is holy and true, which hath the keye of Dauid, which openeth and no man shutteth, which shutteth and no man openeth.*
8. *I know thy workes: behold I haue set before thee an open dore, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denyed my name.*
9. *Beholde, I will make them of the synagogue of Sathan, which call themselves Iewes, and are not, but doe lie: behold I say, I will make them come and worship before thy feete, and shall know that I haue loued thee.*
10. *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, therefore I will keepe thee from the houer of temptation, which will come vpon all the world, to trie them that dwell vpon the earth.*
11. *Behold I come shortly, hold that which thou hast, that no mā take thy crowne.*
12. *Him that ouercommeth will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall goe no more out: and I will write vpon him, the name of my God, and the name of the citie of my God, the new Ierusalem, which commeth downe out of heauen from my God, and I will write vpon him my new name.*
13. *Let him that hath an eare, heare what the spirite saith to the Churches.*

THe sixt epistle is sent to the Angell of the Church of Philadelphia: this Philadelphia was a citie of Lydia, not very famous, nor yet of the meanest. The Angell and Church at Smyrna are highly commended, as we saw in the former chapter, and no thing reprehended: so also here is commendation giuen to this

this Angell and Church of Philadelphia: goodly promises and comfortable assurance made vnto them, & nothing reprobued, vnles we take this as some kind of reproofe, that hee saith, *Thou hast a little strength.* Here was then a worthie pastor, and a worthie flocke, as we shall see by the particulars.

Here is the exordium also taken from the person of him from whom the message is sent: *These things saith he that is holy and true, which hath the keye of Dauid, &c.* These things are peculiar onely to the glorious sonne of God: howsoeuer the first of them may seeme to be common. For the Angels in Heauen be holy, and no spot of impuritie in them at all; they be true, euen without any error or falsehood: but yet not as Christ, for he is not onely holy and true in himselfe, but also the fountaine of holines and truth vnto all others. Then next he doth mention that which is peculiarie ascribed vnto him euery where, as namely, the soueraigne authoritie, the dominion, and gouernment ouer the whole house of God, which is committed vnto him. The gouernment is laid vpon his shoulder, the father hath committed all power into the hands of his sonne. Hee setteth forth this power by the keyes which are to open and to shut: euen as the steward and gouernour ouer an householde hath the keyes committed vnto him. He calleth them the keyes of *Dauid*, to shew that this dominion and rule is to sit vpon the throne of *Dauid*, and to raigne ouer the house of *Iaakob*, that is the Church and house of God, for euer and for euer. He said in the first chapter, I haue the keyes of hell and of death: for hee hath in deed not onely the soueraignie ouer the Church, to dispose and order all things therein, but also he hath all the infernall powers, and all enemies vnder him, so that none of them can hurt or hinder the blessednes of his elect: no not euen of the least of them. Hee being then holy and true, and of this full power and dominion ouer all; let vs not doubt to trust vnto him, and to shew our selues euery way dutifullie subiect.

None can come to bee of the familie of God, but such as hee openeth the dore vnto to take them in: all and euery one of those that bee of the same are so kept in by him, that not one of them can be drawne out. All the hypocrites, all the vnbelieuers, all the workers of iniquitie, euen all the vnclane will hee cast forth, and they shall finde no helpe to get in: for, *hee shutteth and none openeth.* The Pope of Rome chalengeth this power, as if Christ had graunted it to him, that he may open and shut, that hee may saue and destroy, lift vp to heauen, and cast downe to hell at his pleasure. He chalengeth in deede these keyes at the second hand, as first giuen to *Peter*, to whom Christ said, To thee I giue the keyes of the kingdome of Heauen: and so from *Peter*, he saith they come to him by succession. But yee see here how the Pope lieth: Christ saith hee hath them still himselfe, and exerciseth in his owne person the power of them. *Peter* in deede, and the other Apostles had power giuen them to binde and to loose, as Ministers vnder him, by whom he wrought: and the power of the keyes is committed vnto all the Ministers of the gospell, to binde and to loose, to open and to shut, to thrust out, and to receiue in: but not at their pleasure, or for money as the Pope vseth: but as ministers to pronounce and to exercise Christs word: and all their doings herein are so farre ratified, onely as they agree with his trueth. For if any take vpon them, to receiue in those whom his word pronounceth

pronounceth to be shut out, what are they the better for retaining a roome and a place, in the visible Church vpon earth: here is one holdeth the keyes, which will thrust them forth, and shut them out at the last. And againe, if by wicked Prelates, any man contrarie to the truth be cast forth, what is he the worse, there is one openeth, and none can shut, which will receiue him in? If any had the power of the keyes (as the man of sinne, the great Antichrist boasteth) how could it be saide, I open and none shutteth, I shut, and none openeth? Here is the onely gouernour ouer the house of *David*, which is neuer absent from his Church, and therefore needeth no vicar.

Now we come to the narration, *I know thy workes*: That the Lord doth knowe his workes and approve them, as appeareth by this, that hee blameth nothing in him: it might giue great encouragement to proceede. For would not any of vs bee glad to heare from the Lorde, that the things which wee doe are pleasing in his sight? He knoweth all our workes, and will bring them all vnto iudgement, let vs therefore endeauour with all our might to serue and please him.

Then he saith, *Beholde I haue set before thee an open doore, and no man can shut it*: This doth accord with that he saide, I open and none shutteth: hee had made a passage for the gospel, to spread, and to take place in conuertyng men vnto God, and no force of enemies could withstand the same. *S. Paul* vseth the same speech. *1. Cor. 16.* A notable poynte for vs to consider, that wee may behold the worke of God in all times and places. Wee see how the world is bent against the gospel, what power Satan doth raise vnto persecute and expell it: we see also how meane in outward shew the Ministers of Christ are, and yet where hee hath any elect and chosen people to be called home into his familie, hee openeth the dore for them to enter, hee giueth a passage to his heauenlie worde: the diuell with all his power, euen with all the bands of his souldiers, struggling and laboring to shut it, are notable. Here wee may learne to knowe how it cometh, that the gospel is remoued from some places, and continueth in other some. Christ openeth the dore, & none can shut it: he shutteth, and none can open it: where they bee despisers and abuse his gospel, it shall bee easilie remoued: where his kindenes is embraced, the trueth loued, and the fruites thereof brought forth, the enemies doe rage and fret, they deuise and practise all the wayes they can, and yet cannot shut the doore.

Let vs thinke vpon this, *Behold I haue set before thee an open doore, which none can shut*, and labour with all our might to serue Christ while wee feele it is so. Again, let vs take heede we prouoke him not by our sinnes to shut vp the doore: for as none can take the gospel away from vs, so long as wee deale well with it, and please him, so if he be offended and will remoue it, who shall bee able to giue it vnto vs?

Enemies there are very many of all sorts in this our land, which labour to banish the Gospel, and which indeed prouoke the Lord to depart away: & as he threatned the Church at Ephesus, to remoue the candlestick: but if those that fauour the gospel euery where, would euen stirre vp the graces of God in them, and let their loue spring afresh, euen to the glory of God, and to the magnifying of his truth, those e-

nemies

nemies should neuer bee able to preuaile against vs: but hee that hath opened the doore, will open it still wider, and hold it open, let them doe all what they can. If the Lorde shut vp the doore, the sinnes of gospellers doe prouoke him to doe that: For he will neuer to gratifie the vngodly prophane enemies, so plague those which sincerely imbrace the trueth, and obey him. Would to God this might be well considered in time: for the sinnes of those which profess themselves Gospellers, euen in multitudes of them are growen vnto an exceeding height. Shall such as will bee gospellers, condemne and reproch the way of godlines? Here is our feare: here is our danger.

If euer any thing ouerthrow, or bring heauie plagues vpon this land, it is this, that many abuse the gospel vnto their couetousnes, ambition, and other corrupt lustes. Will the Lord suffer the heauenly doctrine to bee made a cloake for sinne, and not be reuenged? Many doe depend vpon the courage and strength of men, and munition both by sea and land: but the safetie of our land hath hitherto stood in this, that Christ set a doore wide open, and hath giuen passage to his Gospel, which as yet none could shut: And so long as he holdeth this doore open, so long our safetie shall continue. Whereupon it followeth, that as they be the greatest procurers of Gods wrath to be poured forth vpon vs, which vnder some kind of professing the truth, abuse, prophane, and disgrace it: so they on the contrarie are the greatest pillars of our peace, which with thankfull hearts imbrace the Gospel, euen in such vprightnes and sinceritie, that they do glorifie God in bringing forth the worthy fruites thereof. Thou desirest to bring some defence to thy countrie, thou hearest of valiant warriors both by sea and land in whom great trust is reposed: these may bee ouerthrowen when God taketh displeasure: shew thy sincere godlines of heart, be faithfull in thy seruice vnto Christ in magnifying and honouring euery waye to the vttermost of thy power, his holy and pure religion, and thou doest more then any of them. An armie of an hundred thousand of the most valiant captaines and souldiers in the lande are not of so sure defence, as tenne thousand sincere Christians, which with seruent zeale of Gods honour imbrace his trueth, worship, and call vpon him, shewing forth their faith by their holy conuersation, in all the works of charitie. For these retaine Christ the king of glorie still holdin g open the doore: whose mightie power shall protect vs. If it rise in thy mind, where shall tenne thousand such bee found? Doe thy best to adde one to that number thy selfe: and God may blesse thine example to draw on others also.

The next words in the text doe confirme this, when he sayth to the Angell of this Church, *Thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my worde, and hast not denied my name*. This pastor and his flocke stood soundly and vprightly in the faith, in the open profession, and obedience of Christs holy word: for the keeping of the worde was not in word alone, (for which they should neuer be praised) but in deed also & in truth. The kingdom of God is not in words, but in power: and not euery one that sayth Lord, Lord, shal enter into the kingdom of heauen, (sayth our Saniour) but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heauen. They standing thus, none can shut the doore which Christ had set open before them. He saith to this Angell, thou

hast

hast a little strength. He stood with his little strength, and did great things, where- in wee may beholde the maruiculous wisedome of God, that by weake instruments would triumph ouer Satan and all his power. No doubt it is written for our com- fort, that when we feele our selues weake, and that we haue but a little strength, and see great and terrible power of the deuill and the world bent against vs, we should not be dismayed. For if our faith and loue be in sinceritie, though but as a graine of mustardseed, let vs not cease to stay vpon Christ, and continue faithfull in his ser- uice, wee shall vndoubtedly get the victorie. For when great things are done by feeble instrumentes, by weake meanes, the power of God doth more gloriouslie shine forth. If the instruments be glorious and mightie in shewe, mens eyes are tur- ned vnto them, and they often stand in the way to shadow the glory of the Lorde. God giueth exceeding great giftes of learning, of knowledge, and courage vnto such as he rayseth vp to encounter the subtle aduersaries: but neuerthelesse ye shall euer see some great learned men in all knowledge which he passeth by, little or no good comming to the church by them, & doth very great things by many men of lesse learning. He is maruiculous in all his wayes. It is certaine, that lesse giftes and not godly simplicitie, make vs fit: and the greater learning where it puffeth vp, hath not the blessing of God: but imploy that little which thou hast receiued with an vpright and good heart to the glory of Christ, and he will blesse it exceedingly. Be faithfull and humble before him, and he will make thy little strength (as it is here called) doe great things in the aduancement of the Gospell, I meane to the comfort of Gods people. If such as be exceedingly learned (and haue not learned true hu- militie) despise thee, thou art yet more blessed then they, thou hast greater vse of thy learning then they: for spirituall giftes serue not for ostentation, or for the glory of the men which haue them, but for the edification and good of Gods people. If thou hast but a little strength, as it is sayd to the Angell of this Church, and doest imploy it well, thy praise is great. Thus farre touching the commendation giuen to this shepheard and his flocke, now followe the promises that Christ maketh vn- to them.

The first is vttered in these words, *Beholde, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which call themselves Iewes and are not, but do lie: Behold, I say, I will make the come and worship before thy feete, and shall know that I haue loued thee.* The pastors & teachers, & the Christians in this Church were so sincere and constant in the holy faith, and feare of the Lord shewing forth their godly deedes, that he promiseth not onely to hold open the doore to let in some that were yet without, but also euen of those that were the most bitter enemies, that is of the vnbeleeuing Iewes: for of all others the Iewes did most wickedly rayle vpon and blaspheme Christ, condemne his gospell, and persecute the Saints of God. They gloried much that they were Iewes, that is, the children of *Abraham*, the chosen people, and the true Church of God, which worshipped him according to his law deliuered vnto them by *Moses*. They said they were *Moses* disciples: but the Lord saith they lie, they bee no trew Iewes, they be not his Church, but are in deede the synagogue of Satan. That hee saith, these shall come and worship before his feete, it is not meant that they should

come

come hypocriticallie, nor compelled by any force against their willes, but in deede with conuerted harts vnto the Lord. As *Saul* of a great persecutor and wolfe, was conuerted and became a most excellent shepheard: so these of hatefull enemies, should be made friendes, and members of the Church.

Here may we note diuers things: as first, in what lamentable state the Iewes are at this day. They take themselves to be the onely people whom God loueth, and ye see though they imbrace the writings of *Moses* and the Prophetes which they vn- derstand not, yet because they reiect Christ and his gospell, they are in deede be- come the synagogue of Satan. What matter is it what they haue been of olde? They are to be pittied and prayed for: they be the kinsmen of our Sauour Christ accor- ding to the flesh, the Lorde take pittie vpon them, and draw them out of the iawes of Satan. Then that the doore was opened at Philadelphia vnto some of these, it may put vs in minde of that precept which Saint *Paul* giueth, 2. *Timoth.* 2. verse 25. In meekenes to instruct the gaine sayers, waiting when GOD will turne their harts. For hee often suffereth sundrie of his chosen to erre and goe astraye, to hate and raile vpon the truth, and vpon those which professe it, whome after ward hee bringeth home, whereby the riches of his grace are manifested. There bee euer more some hypocrites in the Church, and some which beleue but for a time: and it is a grievous thing to the pastors and teachers when they see them fall away, especiallie if they haue been such as haue been of account for their forwardnes. But this is as great a comfort, that where the teachers continue their diligent labors, and walke in all godly simplicitie, the Lorde doth open the doore, and bring in euen as it were to supplie the places of those that fall away, euen of their deadly enemies, and such as there seemed to bee scarce any hope of, that euer they should bee turned to the Lord. The christian people doe helpe forward this blessed worke much, if they walke according to the holy rules of the word: for Christ saith, *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good workes, and glorifie your father which is in heauen.* They which knowe not the worde (as Saint *Peter* speaketh) are very much moued where they behold all godly vertues in them which professe it, and they will say it is a good religion. But where they see euill workes proceede from those that professe the gospell, and especiallie in those which preach it, this driueth them further off, and openeth their mouth to speake a- gainst the heauenlie doctrine of God. As hee then is blessed which is a meane by his true faith and godlines to conuert soules, and to magnifie the holy religion: so is hee accursed, which layeth a stumbling blocke before the blinde, whereby they fall, and which causeth the glorious name of the Lord to be blasphemed.

The Papists at this daye doe boast that they be the onely true catholikes, as these Iewes did, but if wee examine their doctrine and worship by the holy worde of God, which is the onely tuchstone of all tructh, all that are not starke blinde, may see it is the doctrine and worship of diuels which they holde and maintaine, euen the doctrine and worship of the great Antichrist. They bee bitter enemies against all that professe the gospell. If we would haue them conuerted, this is the way, e- uen to followe the example of the Angell and Church of Philadelphia, that is,

bold.

holde the faith constantly, and bring forth all the good fruites thereof. But as our Sauour faith, woe to the world because of offences, of necessitie it is that offences doe come, but woe to the man by whom the offence dooth come: So woe to the Jew, woe to the Turke, woe to the Papists, because many which professe the gospel, liue wickedlie and laye stumbling blockes and offences which driue them backe: and woe to those, euen to those gospellers which laye those stumbling blockes in their way: their burthen shall be great in the day of the Lord.

That the Lord faith he would make them of the sinagogue of Satan, to come and worship before the feete of this Angell, it sheweth their vnfaigned conuersion: for so long as they tooke the Lord Iesus to bee a seducer, and all that beleeued in him to be but heretikes, and children of *Belial*, so long I say, they would neuer be brought to worship at their feete, nor bee taught of them as of true teachers, which preached the faith of Christ. Neither could it euer enter into their thought, that the Lord God loued them, so long as they think that they preach heresies and false doctrines, euen blasphemies against God: but hee faith here, they shall know that I loue thee. Then should they know, that the truth was taught in that Church, and God there truly worshipped, for else how could they knowe that the Lord loued them? The Ministers of the gospel, and all true christian people, when they bee hated, despised, and railed vpon by the blinde world, euen as if they were but scumme and drosse, let them remember this, that standing fast in the way of the truth, and honouring the Lord, as it is written he will honour them: for he will make euen the enemies to know that he loueth them. And then there followeth a reuerence: for where men perceiue that GOD hath set his loue, they cannot but giue regarde. Doubtles the Lorde dooth make it appeare vnto men, whom he liketh, and whom he misliketh: in deede it cannot bee knowne by riches or such like things, but he powreth contempt vpon rich and honorable, which are euill, so that their memoriall doth stincke: and hee maketh the very name sweete of those which feare him, euen as the sweet saour of a precious ointment.

The Prophets in the dayes that they liued in were despised and persecuted: but in the ages following honoured both of good and bad. The Scribes and Pharisees did garnish their sepulchers, Matth. 23. The like may bee saide of the holy Apostles and blessed Martyrs: their fame is precious, and shall be to the last day: for it is knowne God loued them.

The Papists which seeke all corners to finde somewhat that may colour and hide their vngodlie sacriledge in giuing diuine worship and adoration vnto creatures, laye holde of this place: for to worship before the feete of this Angell, they will needes haue to bee, to worship this Angell, this pastor of the Church at Philadelphia. All men may see that this is a weake argument to proue such a matter: for who doth not know that men come and worship before the feete of Christes Ministers in the assemblies, and yet worship not them, but God onely? Although this were enough to answer such a slender cauill of theirs in defence of this that Christ speaketh to Satan, Matth. 4. *Thou shalt worship the Lorde thy God, and him onely shalt thou serue*: yet there is a further answer: and that is, that the worde is v-

sed

sed in the holy Scriptures indifferently for diuine worship, and for ciuill worship. If the Lord said here I will make them of the sinagogue of Satan, come and worship before thy feete, that is, I will make them come and worship thee: yet will it make nothing for the popish worshipping of creatures, seeing it is then but that ciuill bowing of the bodie which is done vnto Princes, and reuerend persons.

The other promise which is made vnto this Angell and his Church, is in these wordes, *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, therefore I will keepe thee from the houre of temptation, which will come upon all the worlde, to trie them that dwell vpon the earth*. It doth appeare by the first wordes of this sentence, that the Angell and Church at Philadelphia, had indured troubles and afflictions for the gospel, for he faith thou hast kept the word of my patience. This commendation could not be giuen, but where patience was shewed in suffering for the truth, and the constant holding of the same: and because they kept the word, and would not by any trouble or danger be driuen from it, the Lord doth promise he would keepe them from being ouercome in the time of temptation which was to come vpon the world. Satan being in extreame furie desired to tempt, and the Lord for the triall of the inhabitants of the earth giueth him scope. Hee raiseth vp subtle and pestilent heretikes to seduce and to poyson such as had receiued the liuely word: he raiseth vp also cruell tyrants to persecute with all the terror that may be shewed: he raiseth vp in deede so many euils and mischiefes, as that hee setteth all on a broyle and in confusion, many are cast downe, but the Lorde promisseth the Angell and Church of Philadelphia, that because they had kept the worde of his patience, hee would keepe them safe in the middest of all these dangerous temptations. This promise we must know is generall, that all they which stand constant and faithfull in the defence of the Lords quarell, against all enemies whatsoever, their dooings are so acceptable vnto him, that he will keepe them euen in the greatest trials that shall fall out vpon the earth. He saide to keepe them from the houre of temptation, not because the temptation cometh not vpon them, but because being tempted they get the victorie.

This is a sweete promise and full of comforte vnto those that stand in the maintenance of the Lordes trueth: wee knowe not what grieuous triall will arise, but bee faithfull now, and wee are sure Christ will keepe vs when the stormes shall bee the greatest, and Sathan shall bee let loose for a time (for it is called the houre of temptation, to teach that his time is limited) euen to worke his whole will. And marke how Christ calleth the Gospel the worde of his patience, it teacheth patience, it sheweth that hee which will imbrace it, and desire to haue his parte in the same, hee must patiently beare the crosse. If thou wilt not beare rebuke, nor suffer any losse, or bee in danger for thy profession, what doest thou professing the Gospel? Hee calleth it the worde of his patience, and thou wilt holde it and bee free from afflictions. What doest thou thinke Christ hath altered it, and that hee will not now haue them afflicted and persecuted which professe it, to the ende that their faith and patience may bee tried? Or doest

H

thou

thou imagine that Satan is wearied or spent with age, that hee will not any longer raise troubles about it? Or is the fire of his wrath quenched? Doth he no longer hate and enuie the glorie of God, and the saluation of the Church? Is hee become more gentle, or doth he want instruments to fitte his turne. Assure thy selfe that Satan was neuer in greater rage and fuller of wrath then in these dayes, because hee seeth his time is short, and his kingdome doth drawe towards an end: and therefore if euer the gospel might be called the word of Christes patience, it may now. If euer men needed to stand firme, and to be armed against all trials, it is now.

After these promises made, now followeth an admonition, *Beholde I come shortly, hold that thou hast, that no man take thy crowne*: Least wee might thinke that the promises of Christ should make them secure and negligent, this is added, for it will arise in mans minde, I haue promise made me that I shall be deliuered, what neede I strue and contend any longer? Yea but wee are entertained into Christs service with this condition, that we must be faithful and fight euen to the ende: and the nature of faith which laieth hold of the promises, that he will make vs get the victorie, is not thereby to take occasion to be slacke, but to take courage in deed to fight more valiantlie. Christ promised he would deliuer them from the snoure of temptation, but yet this goeth with all, hold that thou hast, ye must stand in the faith, yee must not let goe the holy doctrine: for if ye doe, ye lose your Crowne. None shall bee crowned but they that haue laide holde of the trueth, are armed by it with the whole armour of God, and hauing finished all things doe stand. And although a man haue fought long, yet if he let goe his hold at the last, he loseth all. It is certaine the power is strong which assaileth vs daylie, to plucke out of our harts the liuelie power of the trueth, and it is a very necessarie warning which is here giuen, holde fast that thou hast. This is not spoken, either to such as yet haue neuer laide hold of the heauenly doctrine, but neglect and despise it, neither to such as haue professed with zeale and are fallen backe and reuolted, but in deede onely to those which haue receiued the faith, and stand in it. Hee that hath lost his hold, may bee willed if it be possible to laye holde againe of that which hee hath let goe. So may they that yet refuse bee exhorted to embrace and loue that which hether-to they haue not: onely to the godly and sincere Christian it is said, holde fast that which thou hast, that none take thy crowne from thee. And marke how our Saviour doth encourage his seruant to the battaile, by telling him hee shall fight but a little while, *beholde I come quickelie*, faith hee, our nature is fraile, and the Lorde knoweth it better then we our selues, and will not suffer vs to bee held long vnder afflictions, but most graciousslie either quickly endeth, or mitigateth the furie of the battaile. Again we are readie to thinke a few dayes of trouble very long, he telleth vs that it is but a short time: and if we can in deede come to measure the time, and the waight of them rightly with Saint *Paul* (who calleth them light and momentane) it giueth great encouragement. We would continue, we care not how long in that which dooth delight our flesh, but for griefe and sorrowes, wee care not how little they be, or how soone they bee ended: well wee are tolde hee will come quickly,

quickely, let vs beleue him, let vs not shrinke nor quaille for a little: Thus farre touching the narration, now to the conclusion of this message.

Here are set downe in this conclusion, promises very great to euery one that ouercommeth. In what particular church soeuer, of what countrie, nation or people, man or woman, rich or poore, bond or free, that getteth the victorie ouer Satan, ouer sinne, yea ouer what enemies so euer, these promises belong indifferently vnto them.

The first is, him that ouercommeth, *will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall goe no more out*. This is a promise of the perpetuities and stables of the glorie and felicitie which the conquerors shall obtaine and inioy in the presence of the most holy God for euermore. For a man to come to the heauenly glorie, and to haue it in such sorte as that he may be cast out from it, were but a fickle and an vncertaine estate: but the Lorde doth promise and assure, that hee shall bee euen as a firme pillar in the temple of God, which shall neuer bee removed. God is eternall and vchangeable, his temple euen the habitation of his holines standeth for euer. It must needs be so, then he that is a pillar in this temple, how shall he decay, how shall he be removed, how shall not hee abide in his estate world without end? In deede to be shut vp in a place, here seemeth to be a bondage, though the place bee neuer so delightfome, men loue to looke abroad: how is this figure then fit to represent the endles ioy of the faithfull? It is not meant they shall be pent vp to stand as it were in a corner (for the temple of God is most large in which they shall dwell for euer) but this similitude of the pillar is to shew, that they shall neuer be removed nor displaced. Again, in the presence of almighty God is the fulnes of all ioyes, at his right hand there are comelie pleasures, for euermore, as the Prophet *David* speaketh, *Psalme 16*. To dwell with God there is no straightnes: to dwell with God there is no wearines, no desire to see any further varietie of all delights, for the infinite fulnes is in him. Who will not strue and fight against Satan and all his bands of souldiers, to come to so happie and blessed an estate? Christ calleth his father his God, for he saith, *I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God*. He is himselfe eternall God, euen the eternall sonne of the father, yea the wisdom of the father, whom he was not before, for the father was neuer any moment without his wisdom, but he is also man. And so when he did hang vpon the crosse, hee cried out with a loude voyce, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* And when hee was risen againe from the dead, and appeared vnto *Marie Magdalene*, hee willed her to goe tell his disciples, whom he calleth his brethren, *Beholde I ascend to my father, and to your father, to my God and to your God*. Foolish is the cauill of the Iewes, which denie that the Messias promised to the fathers should bee God, because hee should as it is written in the Prophets, make his prayer to God. Shall God, say they, praye vnto God? Nay but the man which is also God, prayed vnto God and calleth him still his God.

The next promise is, *I will write vpon him the name of my God, and the name of the citie of my God, the new Ierusalem, which commeth downe out of Heauen*.

from my God, and I will write vpon him my new name. Here bee sundrie things, and euery one of them of great price and dignitie. First, hee that ouercommeth, shall be as it were marked vp to God, with his name set vpon him: for men will set their names vpon that which belongeth vnto them. This man shall be sealed vp to be the Lords: which is a most speciall dignitie, and glorie. Then next hee shall haue the name of the citie of God, the new Ierusalem set vpon him: hee shall bee free of that Heauenly citie: He shall bee partaker of all the commodities which it doth affoord. Lastly, he shall haue the new name of Christ written vpon him: Hee shall raigne with Christ in glorie: for the new name of Christ, is his exaltation in glorie: for hauing humbled himselfe in obedience, euen vnto the death of the crosse, God exalted him, and gaue him a name about euery name, &c. He then is exalted in power, in dignitie, in maiestie, and glorie, not to himselfe alone, but to lift vs vp also with him.

Then he concludeth with this acclamation, *He that hath an eare, let him heare what the spirite saith to the Churches.* It is the holy Ghost which uttereth these promises vnto all that shall overcome. Let vs not through negligence lose so great glorie: let vs put on the armor of God, and fight valiantlie to get the victorie: for we cannot stand by our owne might, but by the mightie power of GOD. Let vs not mistrust or feare, for hee that hath promised, is most faithfull, and neuer deceiueh any that cleaue vnto him. It is but a little while, euen a few dayes that we stand in the battaile and are tried: but the victorie being gotten, we shall stand as pillars for euer in the temple of God, wee shall bee consecrated and sealed vp vnto him, and bee partakers of his glorie in the Heauens for euer, euen worlde without end. O beloued faint not, nor shrink not from so high a calling: but thinke how the time of your pilgrimage doth swiftlie drawe towards an end.

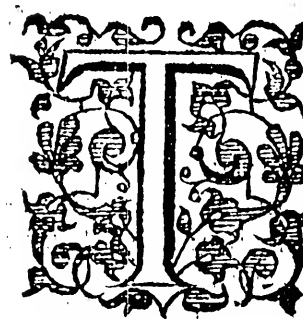


The



The tenth Sermon.

14. *And to the Angell of the Church of Laodicea write, these things saith Amen, the faithfull and true witnes, the beginning of the creatures of God:*
15. *I know thy workes, that thou art neither cold nor hote, I would thou wert cold or hot.*
16. *Therefore because thou art luke warme, and neither cold nor hote, I will spue thee out of my mouth.*
17. *Because thou saiest I am rich, and enriched, and want nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable, and poore, and blinde, and naked.*
18. *I counsaile thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou maiest bee rich, and white rayment that thou maiest be clothed, that thy filthie nakednes doe not appeare, and annoyne thine eyes with eye-salue that thou mayst see.*
19. *As many as I loue I rebuke and chasten, be zealous therefore and repent.*
20. *Beholde I stand at the doore, and knocke: if any heare my voyce, and open the doore, I will come in to him, and will suppe with him, and he with me.*
21. *To him that ouercommeth, will I graunt to sit with me in my throne, as I also haue overcome and haue sit with my father in his throne.*
22. *Let him that hath an eare, heare what the spirite saith to the Churches.*



He seventh or last message is sent to the Angell of the Church of Laodicea: this Laodicea (as some writers reporte) was the chiefe citie of Caria. The exordium of the message is taken from the person of him that sendeth it, that is, from Iesus Christ. *Thus saith Amen, the faithfull and true witnes.* Christ is a firme and constant truth, and (as Saint Paul saith) all the promises of God in him, are yea and Amen, 2. Corinth. 1. Hee bare recorde most faithfullie, and constantly to the truth. He requireth that all his seruants, euen all his disciples, should follow his steppes, and especially the Ministers of the gospel, who are as guides and examples herein to goe before the flocke, which thing the pastor of this Church fayled in. It is written of Christ in standing for and witnessing the trueth, *The zeale of thine house hath eaten mee:* but this Angell and his Church, had no zeale nor heate of loue in them, as wee shall see in the narration. But first we must consider the other parte of the description which is in these wordes, *the beginning of the creatures of God.* He is called the beginning of the workmanship of God, because all was created and had be-

ming by him. As Saint Paul calleth him the first begotten of euery creature, and then sayth, because by him all things were created, which are in heauen, and which are in the earth, thinges visible, and inuisible, whether they be thrones, or dominations, principalities, or powers, all things were created by him, and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things consist, Coloss. 1. verse 15. 16. 17. And we may note, that there is the first creation, and there is that which is called the new creation, as in the Prophets, Beholde I make all thinges newe. And as all things were made by him in the first creation, Joh. 1. so is the restoring of al things, euen the new creation by him. Hee is the beginning of it. Hitherto the exordium, now to the narration.

I know thy works, &c. It is small comfort to this Angell, and to this Church, that Christ did know their workes: for hee doth not praise them in any thing, but discommendeth and disalloweth them, layeth open their wretched estate, and giueth them aduise how to deale for their recouerie from the same. The Lord doth not tell them that they held false doctrine, nor that they were idolaters, adulterers, or such like, but onely this, *Thou art neither colde nor hot.* They had been taught in the true doctrine, they had receiued the same and did professe it, they caryed themselves in some ciuill course of life, but they wanted the heate of loue and of zeale. If they had not professed the trueth, and in some sorte walked in it, howe could it be sayd, thou art not cold? And if they had beene endued with loue and zeale, how might it be sayd thou art not hot? So then here is no vtter denying, nor here is no sound professing. And now least this Church or any other might thinke it but a small matter, to bee neither cold nor hot: the Lord doth declare and lay open, how loathsome a thing it is vnto him, and in how miserable estate such be, as are neither cold nor hot.

Many doe suppose at this day, so they allow and professe the Gospel and name of Christ in any sorte, that they bee right Christians, and in most excellent case, though they be voyd of all zeale, being luke warme, neither hot nor cold. Against such, this scripture is most plaine. For I hope they will not gainsay that which our Lord with his owne mouth vttereth from his glorie. Then let them, and let vs all hearken what he sayth to the Angell of this Church. *I would thou wert either colde or hot.* Doth the Lord then allow of coldnes, which is as much as to haue no religion at all, I meane no true religion? Doubtlesse that can not bee: for yee knowe how it is written, *Be zealous in spirite.* The Lord God requireth feruent loue and zeale in religion. When he sayth then, *I would thou wert either colde or hot:* it is not to shew that there is any goodnes in being colde, but to set forth the badnes of being between both, as we call it luke warme. To be colde is naught, yea very naught, but to be neither cold nor hot is worse.

And beholde howe our Satiour expresth his detestation of this thing, saying, *It will come to passe that I shall spew thee out of my mouth.* That which men do vomit or spew out at their mounth, the stomacke abhorreth, and they receiue it not againe, but cast it away with detestation and loathing. Such then as the vomit is to the offended stomacke, to the mouth, and to the man that speweth it out, such are

lukewarme gossellers to the Lorde Iesus Christ, and shall bee cast forth by him as loathsome vomit. A most terrible sentence of iudgement, vttered by the Iudge himselfe. It might fray thousands, & ten thousands in our daies, for al is ouerspread with newters & such lukewarme gossellers as be here spokē of. In deed the maner of this denouncing iudgement, seemeth to be taken fro hence, that water neither hot nor cold, but warme, & as we vse to say luke warme, doth prouoke the stomacke to vomit. This is then an allegorical speech, y the stomack of Christ doth loath such, & he will spew them forth of his mouth. This is no fable, this is not the word of any mortall man, but of the most blessed Lord himselfe the onely fountaine of all trueth: I beseech ye let it not passe away without credite, let vs beleue it assuredly. For the time will come when such haulters that are without zeale, and can ioyne with all companies and neuer bee tormented, vexed nor grieved in their soules, by hearing and seeing the abominable and filthie words and deeds of vngodly men, shall bee cast forth with loathing and vtter detestation. But it will bee saide, our time is not without zeale, men are hot, euery sort as they take. I answer, that this is spoken not of euery heate to be wanting, for there is a true zeale with loue and meeknes of spirite, which is from God, and there is a bitter zeale which is from the flesh. Of this latter the Lord doth not speak, for it doth abound euery where. Euery false religion, euery heresie and secte hath those which with great vehemencie of zeale stand to defend it: but this zeale is from the flesh. Onely the Lord Iesus and his truth find few which with pure zeale stand in defence of them. The newters, the lukewarme gossellers, which are neither cold nor hot, are earnest and zealous, but not for the gospel: but in defence of their owne wayes. In condemning those that be feruent in spirite to be fooles, they can shew themselves very vehement. In defending the course which they themselves doe followe, if any disallow it, they bee very hot and fierie, looke not to haue them lukewarme therein. Bee these men in so euill a case? Are they worse then they that bee cold? Yea marke how the Lord layeth them open further. *Because thou sayest I am rich, and enriched, and I want nothing: and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable, and poore, and blinde, and naked.* It is one step towards blessednes for a man to know and to feele his miserie. And hee that is in a miserable estate, and thinketh hee is in good case, is so much the further off. The lukewarme gosseller is most wretched and of all other imagineth his estate to be the best. Therefore the Lord wisheth rather that they were cold, then neither cold nor hot. I beseech ye marke well, and let it be deeply printed and ingrauen in your hearts which the Lord vttereth here. It may doe vs good, for are we not growing lukewarme, euen as the Church to whome this message was sent? Then looke what is sayd of them and to them, let vs take heed the same come not vpon vs.

The Angell of Laodicea, and the Church consisting of lukewarme gossellers, tooke themselves to be rich, and enriched, and to want nothing. Writers doe reporte of that citie, that it was very wealthie in worldly substance through wollen cloath. And where men abound in wealth, and liue in pleasures, hauing all thinges which the flesh desireth, they easily grow secure, and imagine that they be in excel-

lent good case. But alas how farre are they deceiued? What sayth he that knoweth indeed what they be? *And knowest not (sayth he) that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poore, and blind, and naked.* Here is a great difference indeede, from that which they did imagine of themselves. Here are (as ye see) diuers wordes heaped vp, of miserable wretchednes, of pouertie, nakednes, and blindnes, touching spirituall things. And why is this heaping vp of words, but to set forth the certainty of a most wretched estate? And why so, but because gospellers neither colde nor hot, of all others need to bee most terribly thundered against, that if it bee possible they may be brought to see their miserie. Let vs obserue a few things in this place for the vse of our time.

Christ doth not send any message nowe, but this message was sent once for all, and if euer to any, to a great number of Churches in these dayes. And then further what assemblie is there any where in all the worlde of sincere Christians, but there are mingled among them many such lukewarme gospellers, hauing professors, and newters? Talk with them and ye shall find that they are perswaded, and haue this opinion of themselves, that they bee very happie men. They know that there is remission of sinnes through the blood of Christ. They knowe and professe all points of doctrine set forth in the gospel. How should these men bee in euill case? Come then to the touchstone to trie the pure golde: come to the wordes which the Lorde himselfe hath vttered, and search by them and scanne the true Christian. Thou saiest of thy selfe, I am a sinner, I looke for pardon through Iesus Christ. The promise is, all that beleue shall be saued. I doe beleue. I take my selfe to be rich, & enriched, and to want nothing. Well, but is thine hart inflamed with the loue and zeale of the glory of God? hast thou a burning desire that the name and glorious Gospel of Christ may be magnified? hast thou an earnest care of the good of thy brethren? Doth this loue of thine breake forth and shew it selfe in actions tending to the same purpose? doth it vex and torment thee when Gods glory is troden downe, when the holy truth is despised and defaced, when the Church goeth to decay and into ruines? If it be thus with thee thou art well indeede. But if thou dost want this loue and zeale, making religion so indifferent, and so light a matter, being in the causes of God neither cold nor hot, thinke while thou wilt that thou art in good case, wee knowe the Lorde sayth true, wee must giue credite to his wordes before all vaine opinions which men haue of themselves, which are these: *And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poore, and blind, and naked.* I may very well mention here that which Saint Paul writeth, *Hee that thinketh hee doth stand, let him take heed hee doe not fall.* 1. Cor. 10. For wee see it plainly that some thinke they haue faith, and that they bee rich, and that they bee in very good case, when they are not, but in deed are most wretched, blind, and beggerly. Mens opinion and concept doth deceiue them. Wee must examine our selues whether we haue the true zeale. Among the Corinthians there were such gospellers, as could go into the idol temple with the heathen, and feast with them, at those feasts which they made at the worship and in the honor of their idols. They could reason smoothly to proue it lawfull as a thing indifferent, but in deed they wanted loue, they wanted

red zeale against all such horrible abominations, and therefore the holy Apostle speaking to such saith, *Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed he fall not.* Then doubleesse the lukewarme gospeller doth thinke he standeth, but doth not. We haue not the Idoll temples of the heathen among vs: but wee haue papistes, and such as doe raile vpon the ministers of the Gospel, and vpon all that doe professe it. Wee haue them which be so loose in life, and so giuen ouer to followe the corrupt lustes of the flesh, that they can not abide any which will not poure forth themselves to the same excessse of ryot, or at the least allow thereof: and thet be gospellers which are so zealous, that they can bee familiar with them, and very merrie euen when they heare them slander and reuile the preachers and professors of the Gospel. What halting is this, what newters are these? If there were any loue of God or true zeale in them, how could they indure such things? Can a man abide to haue those reuiled and slandered which are deare and precious vnto him? The Prophet in the Psalme testifieth thus of himselfe, *Rivers of teares descend forth of mine eyes, because men keepe not thy lawe.* This was the zeale of the Prophet. And Saint Peter testifieth of Lot when he did dwel in Sodome, that he vexed & tormented his righteous soule from day to day, in seeing & hearing there their wicked deeds, 2. Pet. 2. And now a dayes wee haue some gospellers which can laugh euen heartily, at the committing of great sinnes, and enormous offences: It is a sporte to make men, or to see them made drunken. If I should enter into all particulars I should bee tedious. Yee may easily see what manner of professing the Gospel hath inuaded our Churches, and how farre it hath preuailed: namely vnto this, that they be accounted the wisest and the very best Christians, they carrie awaye all the commendation, which be neither cold nor hot. They be the men which are worthe to be magnified, that be lukewarme.

This is the estate now generally, how miserable let the words of Christ himselfe here testifie. Al seemeth now happy, the gospel, the gospel, is in euery mans mouth: but if the Lord will spew out of his mouth all lukewarme gospellers, all that be neither colde nor hot. If all such thinking themselves to be in happie case, are in deed wretched, and miserable, and poore, and naked, and blinde, what shall become of multitudes? Looke vpon many at this day, they haue the Bible, they reade a little now and then, they bring their bookes to the Church, they open them and looke vpon the text at a Sermon, but yet a man may dwell by them long, and not be able to discerne, whether they fauour the papistes, or the protestants. Well, let vs learne to iudge both of our selues and of others, not as the world iudgeth, which can abide no zeale in the Lords causes: but as our Sauour Christ hath here pronounced. For say and doe all what they can his word shall be found true at the last. Woe be to newters, woe be to the lukewarme gospellers which are neither colde nor hotte. Christ will spew them out, he will reiect them with loathing and detestation. Their soules contrary to their opinion, are void and destitute of all heavenly ornaments and spirituall graces. If they repent not they must perish, therefore let them heare now what the Lorde sayth further to the Angell of this Church.

I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou maist be rich, and white raiment,

raiment, that thou maist be clothed, that thy filthy nakednes appeare not, and annoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou maist see. O bounteous Lorde, and gracious Sauour, who giueth counsell to this pastour and his flocke how they may come out of their miserie. Was it not great kindnes that such a pastor and such a Church as this should be chosen for one of the seue vnto whom this prophecie was to be sent? Is it not much that they must stand as one of the seuen golden candlestickes? Is it not more that hee layeth open their estate vnto them plainly? for whome would they haue beleueed among men that should haue told them so much? And yet he goeth further, and giueth them most wholesome aduise and counsell, whereby they may become very blessed in all spirituall and heavenly blessings. The counsell is to receiue from Christ all good things. Hee vseth speeches answerable to those by which hee laide open their miserie. *Thou saiest I am rich (saith hee) and enriched, and knowest not that thou art miserable, and poore.* Hee that hath plentie of gold is not poore, for gold maketh rich: And so he sayth here, Buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou maist bee rich. The golde which is tried in the fire is the more pure without drosse and mixture: and therefore to note the puritie and perfection of the heavenly riches giuen to vs in Christ, they are called golde tried in the fire. There is plentie of fine gold in Christ, to make vs rich vnto God: and wee are called vpon to come and buy it of him. Then because he said thou art naked, he saith, *Buy of me white raiment, that thou maist be clothed, that thy filthy nakednes do not appeare.* Clothing is to couer nakednes: wee are not onely naked in our selues, but full of filthines and shame which appeareth vnto God, who can not but cast vs forth and loath vs as filthy and abominable, so long as wee stande in it. Christ hath the white raiment to put vpon vs, euen his owne innocency and pure holinesse which is without all spot or blemish, and therefore called white raiment. And because wee are washed in his blood from our vncleannes, and his righteousnes through faith is put vpon vs, it is most fitly compared to a garmente. All our pure rayment is in Christ, such as put him on shal be able to stand in the presence of the most glorious God. For he that is clothed with the white raiment of Christ, what want can there be? Then where he had said thou art blind, he sayth, annoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou maist see. In Christ the remedies against all miseries are to be had. He hath this precious eye salve for to bestowe vpon vs. For he hath the spirit of light, the spirit of all true wisdom, which doth open and illuminate the eyes of our soules which are vtterly blinde. O Lorde giue vs this precious eye salve, that wee may see.

Thus we see the goodly treasures which are in Christ, to make vs happy: but how doth he will vs to buy them of him? Are the heavenly graces of Christ sold? Or haue we any thing for which we may buy them? For answer vnto this, wee are first to note, that this buying is without any price giuen to him, it is to buy for nothing. We may not thinke this strange, for the like saying is in the Prophet: *Oh euery one that thirsteth come to the waters, and they that haue no money, come buy and eate: come I say, buy without money, and without price wine and milke:* I say 55. Here ye see all are called to buy for nothing: and so is Christ Iesus here to be vnderstoode. For

alas

alas what haue we to giue for such heavenly treasures? And what wanteth the Lord Iesus? hath hee not all fulnes in himselfe? are not all good things his both in heauen and earth? They bee worse then mad which imagine that the heavenly treasures can be bought with any price. But yet notwithstanding wee are sayd to buy them after a sort, as I will lay open vnto you.

Our Sauour sayth, *The kingdom of heauen is like to a treasure hid in the field, which when a man hath found hee hideth, and for ioy thereof goeth and selleth all that hee hath, and buyeth that field.* Also he sayth, *The kingdom of heauen is like to a merchant man seeking goodly pearles: which when he had found one pearle of great price, went and solde all that he had and bought it.* How is this to be vnderstood? First, ye see the kingdom of heauen is a most rich thing, but it lyeth hid as treasure couered in the earth, and as a most precious pearle which none can value but hee that hath skill that way. For albeit the riches of the graces of Christ be displayed and layd open by the preaching of the gospell, yet they lie hid to the world: and therefore the world passeth by them, and esteemeth them not. But such as haue their eyes opened and doe see them in deede, are so rauished with ioy and delight, and doe make so precious account of them, that in respect and comparison of the same, they despise and set light by all other things which they possesse here in the world. When they with the eye of faith looke vpon the fine tried golde, and pure raiment which Christ offereth, all earthly riches are vile vnto them, and but doun in comparison. When they behold the ioyes and sweete delights which they shal possesse for euer, that shall raigne with Christ in glorie: they contemne all fleshly pleasures, and despise all earthly honours as vaine and transitorie. When a man (as Christ requirereth) doth forsake father and mother, wife and children, landes and houses, yea all that he hath for to take vp the crosse: or when a man is so prepared in his mind, preferring the kingdom of God before them all, this is after a sort to sell all that he hath to buy the precious pearle, and the fine golde and pure raiment. The Church at Laodicea was wealthy in worldly things, and euen drowned in the loue of the, but the heavenly treasures in Christ they did little esteeme, wherefore this doctrine was necessary for them to sell all, and to buy those things. It was a most fit admonition for them to pull their affections from the things here below, and to set them vpon heavenly things. Let vs then I pray you, remember some good lessons from this place, and let vs be carefull neuer to forget them: And that is, if wee feele our selues dull in religion, neither cold nor hot, and so imagine that we be rich, because we bee not as vtter despisers, nor as the worst sort of men, how farre wee are wide, how much we be deceiued, seeing the Lord telleth vs that we be in deed wretched, poore, naked, and blind.

Then further, let vs know it is the loue of this world that doth beguile vs, we loue riches, and all things which may satisfie the lustes and delightes of the flesh: And then that we are admonished to sell all, and to buy the gold tried in the fire, and the white raiment of Christ. Finally, that we must annoint our eies with eye salve, that wee may see. For certainly if men were not blinde, and so through blindnes make a blind choice, that is, preferre earthly things before heavenly, they could neuer be

luke-

lukewarme, but for ioy would sell all and buy those precious things of Christ. May we, will some say, holde that some men learned, and able learnedly and deeply to dispute in diuinitie, are yet blind? For there bee at all times learned diuines, which are neither hot nor cold. I answer, it is strange that such should be blinde, & should neede this eye salve to annoint their eyes: but yet certainly they are blinde. They do take themselves without all comparison to see best; they thinke themselves rich about all others: but being drowned in the loue of riches and honours of the world, being in deed blinded with the corruptible golde of this earth; they neuer saw the glory of these treasures which Christ selleth vs, and of which they can so learnedly speake. For if they had, the sight would rauish them with ioye, they should not be lukewarme, but sell all, euen tread downe as doun all earthly treasures to winne those. Be out of doubt that all and euery one which are neither cold nor hot, though they be neuer so learned, are blind and miserable, and poore, and naked: and need to be called vpon to sell all, and with ioy, with loue, and with zeale to buy this gold and white raiment. Ye shall hardly perswade any that are worldly minded but that they are in good case, if they professie the Gospell, how then shall a man bee able to perswade a great diuine, which in his owne opinion is euen a light to all men, that he is wretched, poore, naked and blind? If he will not be perswaded, let vs beleue the Lord Iesus that all lukewarme worldly minded gospellers bee euen no better, though they seeme neuer so learned and wise.

But see how the Lord proceedeth in admonition to this Angell and his Church: *Those whom I loue, I chastise, be zealous therefore and amend.* We see how the Lord hath layd open this Angell and this Church euen to their great shame and reproch among all Churches, and to their owne grieve and terror: For they had a very high opinion of themselves, and the Lord setteth the as low. Now lett this sharpe rebuke and chastisement should make them desperate, and cast them further off, as taking it that the Lorde did abhorre and hate them, hee sheweth that it proceeded wholly from loue. The naturall parentes that loue their children deere, and had rather feeble smart themselves then it should light vpon their children, will rather, though it bee to their owne grieve, make them feeble the smart of sharpe chastisement, then that they should be vnnurtured, and cast themselves headlōg into miserie. The holy ghost witnesseth, that our heavenly father dealeth after the same manner, Heb. 12. If instruction and admonition by words will not serue, but that wee will runne on vnto our great perill and hazard of eternall destruction, rather then he will haue vs perish, though he delight not in our miseries, yet will hee presse vs downe with rebuke and sorrow. The same thing doth our Saviour here testifie, that of loue, hee doth chastise: It mixeth a great sweetnes with a sharpe reprehension, when wee know it proceedeth from good will, and from loue, of such as bee our friendes and wish vs well. How much more then might this Angell and Church reioyce in the sharpe rebuke and chastisement here layd vpon them, when the Lord Iesus professeth that hee doth it of loue? How farre doth his loue surmount and excell, to loue them that did not shew any heate of loue towards him? Might it not make them euen ashamed of themselves, and so moue a wrath and an indignation against their owne

owne want of zeale towards him? Hee did it to none other purpose, but that they might repent and be saued: and so he addeth, *Be zealous therefore and amend.* He did not tell them openly to the end hee might disgrace them, that they were wretched, poore, naked, and blind, but in very deede that he might heale them. There be diseases so dangerous, that the Phisitian is forced to giue very bitter and violent potions, or els he shall do no good at all: so dealeth the Lord here with him that carrieth himselfe aloft vpon the opinion of his wisdom, and that he is rich in all spirituall treasures, and a man very happie, and hunteth after estimation that waye, there is no greater cut, nor more grieuous wound, then to laye him open to bee a blind foole, naked, poore, and very miserable. The heavenly Phisitian must either lose him, or giue him this purgation to emptie his stomacke: and that is the cause it is done in this manner. He disgraceth them openly, and with very sharpe threatening and terror, not delighting in their reproch, but they haue neede of it, that they may be brought to repentance, and inflamed with pure zeale, and so be saued. Let vs obserue here what an excellent thing it is, to be feruent in spirite. Let the worldly lukewarme gospeller drily laugh and smile at it, yea let him haue it in vtter derision as a mad thing: but let vs remember that Christ saith, *Be zealous therefore and amend.*

Againe, let vs know that the ministers of the gospell are to imitate the Lord Iesus, euen sharply to rebuke such as stand in need to be so dealt withall, but of a tender loue to saue their soules: and let them knowe they are to take it well when it is to such an vse, although they seeme to be much disgraced. It is better saith our Saviour in the gospell, to enter into life hauing but one eye, or maimed, then the whole bodie with two eyes should bee cast into hell fire. So is it better for a man to bee layde open and disgraced, yea euen to his great reproch and shame, and so come to repentance and be saued, then to goe in a wrong way euen with estimation and credite vnto destruction.

Behold I stand at the doore and knocke, &c. Here is yet further kindnes declared: the Lord standeth at the doore knocking to be let in. Hee is the good shepheard, he seeketh vp that which goeth astray, he standeth knocking at the doore of mans heart to enter and to make it his Temple to dwell in. Marke here diuers things: as first that the Lorde doth not onely knocke and call at the doore of mans heart, but continueth the same: for hee standeth at the doore, and hath stood at the doore, as the word importeth. This is much that hee must waite vpon vs, mouing vs to receiue him: but the truth is, wee neuer haue any minde of him but when hee doth stand knocking at the doore of our heart. Then further beholde howe difficult a thing it is for the heart of man to receiue Christ, and to be turned to God. We are so well contented that the power of darkenes shall raigne in vs, wee take such delight and pleasure in the corrupt lustes of sinne, and we are so fast asleepe, that hee may knocke and knocke againe, we regard him not. But let vs take heed, for albe- it his kindnes is marueilous, yet he will not alwayes offer himselfe, nor alwayes bee found. Ye know how it is written, *Today if ye will heare his voice, harden not your hearts:* and then while it is called to daie, Heb. 3. And how terribly he threatneth,

that such as regard not but despise when hee calleth, how they shal crie vnto him when their miserie commeth vpon them, but hee will not heare, but laughe at their destruction. Be not therefore too bolde with him. If hee haue by his worde and by the motions of his spirite stood daelie knocking at the dore of thy heart, shewing thy finnes, and mouing thee to repentance, and thou hast made light thereof, take heed least those knockings of his cease, and thine hearte bee more hardned, so that there is no feeling of any godlie sorrow vnto repentance. Make much of this knocking, make much of these motions of the spirite, for manie that haue had great remorse & beginnings for to repent, are now hardened, & boldened in sinne. Most miserable are they which despise his knocking and driue him away. On the contrarie parte they be a thousand times blessed which open vnto him, and so receiue him. For marke what he saith: *If any do heare my voice, and open the doore, I will come in to him, and will suppe with him, and he with me.* What more happie guest can be receiued in? what good thing can be wanting where hee is? If Christ dwell in the heart by faith, if the graces and power of Christ be receiued in, al euil and miserie is driuen out, and al goodnes and felicitie do succeed. Darknes is driuen out, the deuill is expelled, sinne is destroyed, and horror of the dreadful iudgment doth vanish away. There is light, there is God, there is righteousness, and peace, and ioy of the holic Ghost. Ful notably doth the prophet Daud sette forth this, Psal. 24. when he saith, *Lift vp your heades ye gates, and be ye lift vp ye euerlasting doores, and the king of glorie shal come in.* Who is the King of glorie? the Lord strong and mightie, the Lord mightie in battaile. Our enemies bee stronge, euen death and sinne and the deuill, but hee hath encountered with them in battaile, and subdued them, so that we receiuing in him we receiue in all heauenlie power. We are base and vile in our corruption: he is the king of glorie, and we through him, shal be rayfed vp vnto glorie. He setteth it forth that we shall receiue all good things by him, in these words, *that if any open the doore he will come in and sup with him, &c.* Hee bringeth all the dainties with him, and compareth it vnto a supper, for we shal be fed with them. We shal be euen filled aboundantly with all sweete ioies: this supper shal neuer bee ended. But it may be said, seeing all the good things are from him, how is it saide he wil sup with vs? what haue we to giue him anie supper? he taketh ioy and delight in our faith, in our loue, in our obedience, or in all holy vertues which proceed from vs. For these are those sweete things which Solomon in his song of songs, declareth that Christ delighteth in from his spouse. But in this place the papistes steppe in for free will. Christ Iesus (saie they) doth knocke, that is he doth offer grace, and it lieth in man to giue consent by free will holpen also by his grace. Likewise that saying in the Psalme, *Lift vp your heades ye gates and be ye lifted vp ye euerlasting doores, and the king of glory shal come in,* seemeth to ascribe it to mans own wil to open the dores of the hart to receiue in Christ. We haue the plaine testimonies of the holy scriptures, that there is nothing left in man, no not so much as to thinke a good thought, Gen. 8 ver. 21. 2. Cor. 3. ver. 5. Ephes. 2. ver. 1. Moreover if a man cold think a good thought of himselfe, then could he do somwhat without Christ, but Christ saith,

without

without me yee can doe nothing, Iohn 15. verse 5. It is God (saith Sant Paul) that worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish, Phil. 2. vers. 13. If a man will saye then how are those former speeches to be construed? Thus yee must vnderstand: first, that God worketh vpon the harts of men, not as men worke vpon blockes or stones, which haue no sense nor vnderstanding: for man hath vnderstanding, hee hath a will, he hath affections. Then secondly, that free is opposed to bond, and free is opposed to compelled. In respect of the one, man hath free will, in respect of the other he hath not. Man naturallic loueth and delighteth in euill, his will not forced nor compeled doth chuse the same: man despiseth and reiecteth the Gospell of his owne will. In this respect his will is free vnto all euill, that is hee willet euill not compelled, but caried thereunto with pleasure.

But now touching the other, corruption is spread ouer al the powers of his soule, so that hee is in thraldome and bondage vnto sinne, and hath not the freedome so much as to thinke one good thought. So farre as the grace, the life, and power of Christ crucified is in him, to the killing of this corruption, in which his will is held captiue, so far is his will set free, so far can he will well and doe wel. As it is written, if the sonne make yee free, then shall ye be free in deede. So farre shall we consent to that which is good, loue that which is good, and delight in that which is good: so farre shall wee hate and abhorre that which is euill: as this grace of Christ increaseth in vs, so wee lift vp our heads in freedome more and more. Then marke what Christ saith, *No man commeth vnto mee, vnles the father that sent mee drawe him,* Iohn 6. This drawing is not by force, but God reformeth the will and the affections, so that a man ioyfullie receiueth Christ, and therefore is sayd to open the dores of his hart. Thus much touching this poynte, now remaineth the conclusion of this Epistle.

He that ouercommeth, I will giue vnto him, to sit with me in my throne, as I ouercame, and sit with my father in his throne. This is a great promise vnto euery one that shall stand in the battaile and get the victorie. Christ hath overcome and raigeth in glorie, and they that overcome shall raigeth with him, though not in equall glorie. There can be no greater thing then this, let it therefore put hart and courage into vs, to fight the good fight of faith against the diuell, against sinne, and against all the enemies of God. If this doe not moue vs, it is because we haue not an care to heare: let vs therefore earnestlie begge, that our eares may bee opened more and more, that we may heare what excellent and most worthie things the spirite speaketh to the Churches. And thus wee haue scene what the estate of the seuen

Churches was, and so be able to iudge of the state of the vniuersall Church at that time: for by these seuen, yee may see in what estate all were.

The



The eleuenth Sermon.

CAP. 4.

1. *After this I looked, and beholde, a doore was open in Heauen, and the first voyce which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me, saying, come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be done hereafter.*
2. *And immediatlie I was rauished in the spirite, and beholde a throne was set in Heauen, and one sate vpon the throne.*
3. *And he that sate was to looke vpon like vnto a Iasper stone, and a Sardine, and there was a rainebowe round about the throne, in sight like vnto an Emeraud.*
4. *And rounde aboute the throne, were foure and twentie seates, and vpon the seates I saw foure and twentie elders sitting, clothed in white rayment, & had on their heads Crownes of golde.*
5. *And out of the throne proceede lightnings and thundrings, and voyces, and therewere seven lampes of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirites of God.*
6. *And before the throne, there was a sea of glasse, like vnto Chrystall: and in the middest of the throne, and round about the throne, were foure beastes full of eyes before and behinde.*
7. *And the first beaste was like a Lion, and the second beaste like a Calfe, and the third beaste had a face like a Man, and the fourth beaste was like a flying Eagle.*
8. *And the foure beastes had each one of them sixe wings about him, and they were full of eyes within, and they ceased not day nor night, saying, holy, holy, holy, Lord God almightie, which was, and which is, and which is to come.*
9. *And when those beastes gaue glorie, and honour, and thanks, to him that sate on the throne, which lieth for euer and euer:*
10. *The foure and twentie elders fell downe before him that sate on the throne, and worshipped him that lieth for euermore, and cast their crownes before the throne, saying,*
11. *Thou art worthisie O Lord to receiue glorie and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy willes sake, they are and haue been created.*

IN the former chapters, we haue had the first vision of this booke, by which Saint Iohn was called, authorised and appoynted, to receiue this Prophecie, and to write it in a booke, and to send it to the seven Churches of Asia. Wee haue had also seven seuerall epistles or messages, vnto the seven Angels of those seven Churches,

ches. In which we haue seene by those seven what was the state and condition of the vniuersall Church militant at that time. For some were very excellent pastors, & had excellent flockes, some were commended, and also in some things dispraised, and some were wholly discommended. No doubt if the Lorde had gone through all the particular Churches at that time in the world, it would haue fallen out euen so. We haue had also very worthy and precious promises set forth to all that get the victorie in the Christian battayle.

Now followeth the second vision, which reacheth vnto the twelfth chapter, setting forth the state of things, euen to the worldes ende: in which there is first (as namely in this chapter and the next) set forth how Christ receiued this reuelation from the hand of the father, to giue to his Church, for he calleth it before in the first chapter, the reuelation of Iesus Christ, which GOD gaue him, to shew to his seruants, &c. And here shall we see how it was giuen him. In all this whole chapter, the glorious maiestie of God almighty, from whom the Lorde Iesus receiued this reuelation, is described and set forth euen as Iohn saw the same in vision: now to the words as they lie. The things here reuealed, be all from the secret counsels of God, they bee heavenly, and therefore hee saith, *I looked, and beholde a doore was open in heauen.* Why is this doore opened? This doore is opened for to let him in to see all these things which should come to passe: that is the first circumstance. Then next he is called vp with a loude and glorious voyce: for he saith, *The first voyce which I heard, was as it were of a trumpet talking with me, and saying, come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be done hereafter:* for he doth not presume in any thing, but as the heavenly voyce calleth him, and giueth speciall and direct commandement. Then he was immediatlie rauished in the spirite: For as the Prophet Ezechiel was by the spirit in the visions of God, carried from Chaldea to Ierusalem, so this holy Apostle is carried by the spirite in the visions of God, into Heauen, he is by the spirite made fit, and capable to see, and to receiue all those heavenly visions that should bee shewed him. And now hee sheweth what he saw there, for hee was not taken vp to see things for his owne priuate vse, or which could not, or might not be vttered. Beholde a Throne was set in Heauen, and one (saith he) sate vpon the Throne. Now beginneth that description of the most high and most glorious diuine maiestie, as it was shewed him in vision. It is set forth in sundry partes: as in the first place by his office, that he sitteth as King, and Iudge of all the world, vpon his glorious throne, for when the scripture will set God before vs as King and Iudge, it placeth him vpon his throne.

It may here be saide, that God is inuisible, incomprehensible, and that as he saith by the Prophet *Esay*, chap. 66. The whole Heauens be his throne, and the earth his footstool, how then doth hee see a throne set in Heauen, and one sitting vpon it? The answer vnto this is, that the maiestie of God is here described, not in the fulnes thereof, but as it was shewed to Iohn in vision, euen so farre as he and we might be capable thereof. In the next place is shewed, that God the father, first is most glorious of himselfe, and in himselfe, and then that with the same his glorie he beautifieth all things: that precious glorie of God in himselfe, is resembled by two preci-

ous stones: for he saith, *He that sate was to looke upon like vnto a Iasper stone, and a Sardine.* The other is resembled by the raine bowe round about the throne, in sight like vnto an emeraude: by this I say, is resembled, how he beautifieth the creatures. For as the sunne casting his beames into the darke rainy cloud, causeth the rainbow with bright and goodly colours: so God almighty, the fountaine & father of lights, casteth forth his light vpon the darke creatures, and maketh them to shine with glory.

Then further, this heauenly maiestie of God is set forth in an other part, as namely by that honourable companie which sitting vpon seates, compasse his throne round about. For he saith, *That round about the throne were foure and twenty seates, & vpon the seates were foure and twentie Elders, &c.* We know that great kings, & chiefe iudges, sitting in their royaltie, and shewing their glory, are accompanied with their nobles and princes that sit with them: Euen so this king of all kings, and most high iudge, sitteth vpon the throne of his glory, and raigneth for euermore, in the midst of all those whom he hath exalted vnto that heauenly dignitie to bee kings and priests vnto him. By these foure and twentie then are resembled not only the Patriarches and Prophets of old, and the Apostles of Christ in the new testament, but also the whole Church, euen the whole companie of blessed Saints. The glory of this companie is resembled, in this, or as I may say in all these, that they be so nigh about the throne of God, that they sit vpon seates, that they bee clothed in white, and haue on their heads crownes of gold. For all the sonnes and daughters of the most high (though many of them for a time bee base vpon the earth in outward shewe) are exceeding glorious kinges and queenes, and shall raigne with the Lorde for euer. Fourthly, here are operations and effectes to declare this glorious maiestie of God almighty. *For out of the throne proceeded lightnings, and thundrings, and voices, & there were seuen lampes of fire burning before the throne, which are the seuen spirites of God.* These are the effectes of his mightie word, and holy spirite. With his voyce and word he striketh, shaketh and terrifieth all things, hee lighteneth and quickeneth by his spirite. By the lightnings and thundrings his terrible voice of the lawe is fitly resembled: for the lawe giueth light, but such as is with trembling and terror, because it findeth vs sinners. And therefore at the deliuey of it, there were lightnings and thundrings, and the mount Sinay it selfe did tremble and shake. The gospell giueth a comfortable light, and cheerefull, the ministerie thereof, being the ministerie of the spirite, 2. Cor. 3. And therefore is resembled by the seuen lampes, which (he sayth) are the seuen spirites of God. There is indeede but one spirite, but because of his manifolde operations, (and as I shewed in the first chapter) because *Iohn* writeth vnto seuen Churches, and hee maye seeme to worke in euery seuerall Church of those seuen, as a seuerall spirite, he is set forth by seuen lampes, and is called the seuen spirites of God. In the fift place wee haue the providence and sight of God into al, and ouer al things here in this world. This is resembled by these words, *And before the throne was a sea of glasse like vnto chrystall.* This sea of glasse is the world: for the world is fitly called a sea, because it is full of stormes, and tempestes, and waues that are raised vp. It is full of rockes

vpon

vpon which many doe dash, and make shipwracke, and are drowned in destruction and perdition. And although vnto vs there be many things in it which are secret and hid, many things seeme to happen by chance, yet vnto him of whom the Prophet speaketh (saying, *The darkenes is no darkenes vnto thee, but the darkenes & the light are alike.* Psal. 139.) there is nothing secret. And therefore this sea is sayd to be like vnto chrystall. Ye know that the chrystall is so cleere, and our sight doth so run through it, that if there be but a little spot it appeareth: Euen so for this whole world the sight of God pearceth through it without any let, and seeth euery thing far more cleerely, then we see the spots if any be in a chrystall. For all things lie open and naked vnto his eyes, Heb. 4. The deuill is subtile in the darke, and wicked men haue deepe reaches to practize mischief against the Church: but this is a speciall comfort, that they can hide nothing, no not euen their secret thoughtes from the eye of God. Remember this I pray yee, that this worlde is like a chrystall sea before the throne of God. For they that be good may haue great comfort by it, and the euill conscience may be terrified: For God seeth cleerely through thy heart and conscience.

And it is not to bee omitted that this sea is of glasse, for albeit the reprobate are drowned in it, yet through the fauour of God, though it be a most troublesome sea, yet no one of the elect can bee drowned in it: for vnto them it is as glasse. Whensoever ye see troubles and turmoiles raised, and all seemeth to be confused as if there were no diuine sight or providence: call to mind this place, that this sea of glasse is before the throne of God almighty, and that vnto him it is in euery part as cleere as chrystall. Consider also, that this high maiestie which reuealeth the thinges which should fall out in this troublesome worlde, seeth them perfectly and cleerely afore hand, euen as in a most cleere chrystall.

Thus hauing set forth the heauenly maiesty of God by his sight and providence: he commeth in the next place vnto the chiefe and principal ministers of his power, the holy Angels, in whom and by whom he declareth his glory and magnificence. These are ministring spirites: Hebr. 1. Saint *Paul* calleth them thrones, principalities, mightes, and dominations, Coloss. 1. for they are about the throne of the most high, and he doth execute his will and decrees by them. Of these he saith here, *That in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were foure beasts full of eyes before, and behind.* Then about this throne there be most glorious instruments, as wee shall see their nature and properties by that description which is giuen. They are most vigilant, being full of eyes, before and behind. The first of the foure is like a lion. And the lion is the king of beastes: so that here is noblenes and courage resembled hereby. The heauenly spirites haue nothing base in them, which to vs is resembled by the likenes of the lion. The second is like a calfe: by this there is strength and might signified: for the ox is strong, they be mights and powers. The third had the face of a man: whereby is signified their vnderstanding and wisdom: for among the creatures below, man onely hath wisdom and vnderstanding. The fourth was like a flying eagle. The eagle doth mount aloft: whereby may very well bee vnderstoode that the heauenly spirites doe receiue the knowledge of high

to see and counsels. For they are aloft euen about the throne of God, and manie high and great secrets are opened vnto them. The Lord hath had here vpon earth among men excellent worthy instrumentes, circumspecte and vigilant to doe his worke, noble, valiant, full of courage, strong, expert and wise, vnto whom he hath also communicated high secrets, but yet in all these they haue come far short of the blessed and glorious Angels in heauen, which are about his throne, which are resembled by these similitudes. Further it is saide that euery one of them had sixe wings about him. The Angels being spirits haue indeed no bodily or visible shape, but for our vnderstanding and capacitie, they are saide to haue winges, whereby is represented how swift, how full of readines, and expedition they be at all times, to execute the will of God. They be sent from the highest heauens into all partes of the world, and doe most speedily performe their seruice, and therefore are saide to haue winges. Vnto this *Dauid* had respect, when hee sayd, The Lord rode vpon Cherub, and came flying, Psalm. 18. ver. 11. The Prophet *Esay* chapter 6. saw the Lord sitting vpon his high throne, and the Seraphims standing about it. Hee sayth they had each of them sixe winges And moreouer he addeth, that with two of those winges they couered their faces, with two they couered their feete, and with two they did flie. And what did this signifie? The two winges wherewith they couer their faces doe teach, that albeit the Cherubims, and Seraphims, euen those heauenly spirites be very bright and glorious, yet they come so farre short of the Lord God of glorie himselfe, that they be not able to indure the beholding of his infinite brightnes and maiestie. Ye see wee inioye, and walke in the cheerefull light of the Sunne, but yet we are not able to looke fully and directly vpon it, when it shineth in the full strength and brightnes: Euen so it may not seeme strange vnto vs, that the Angels themselues, are not able to look vpon the depth of Gods maiestie. With two they couered their feete, saith the Prophet. They bee holy and pure, there is no spot or blemish of sinne in them: but yet their holines is not infinite, and so not to be compared with the holines of God, their waies are not equall with his waies, and this is testified in that they couer their feet. They stand not to iustifie their waies in comparison of the almightie. How farre from this are prophane hypocrites which dwell in houses of clay, and which drinke in sinne like water, and hauing nothing cleane in them, yet stande to iustifie themselues euen before God? With two they flie. This is to declare (as I said before) how swift and readie they be in the seruice of God. Saint *Iohn* doth not speake here that these couered their faces, and their feete, and therefore I can not tell whether these sixe winges, to each haue the same signification which I haue shewed of the Seraphims. It is very like, but I do not affirme for certaine.

Then he saith they were full of eyes within. He said before that they were full of eyes before and behind, to see and behold euery way for to execute their ministerie and seruice to God: but this hath a farther meaning, and that is, that they doe not onely behold things which lie open, but also things hid and secret. True it is, that God alone is the searcher of the heart, but yet withall wee must vnderstand, that as great kings doe make their secrets knowne vnto them which are next vnto them, so

the Lorde openeth secrets to his Angels. They are made to see hidde and secret things.

Then next he sheweth how these glorious Angels doe continually without ceasing, laud and magnifie God. For he sayth, *They ceased not day nor night, saying, holy, holy, holy, Lord God almightie, which was, and which is, and which is to come.* In that they doe not cease day nor night, we may not thinke it strange: for though it be a wearisome thing vnto vs, that are burthened with corrupt and dull flesh, to continue in praising God, especially because wee haue small delight in it: yet it is farre otherwise with that blessed company of heauen: they are not burdened, it is their whole ioy and felicitie to glorifie God, and they are so rauished with the loue thereof, that they can neuer waxe wearie. In that they proclaime *holy, holy, holy*, it is to testifie that all his waies, yea euen all his most seuerer iudgements are iust & vpright, & holy, how soeuer they may seeme vnto men. There be many sore plagues, and horrible iudgements set forth in this booke, to bee executed vpon the wicked world, which vnto the corrupt sense of flesh and bloud may seeme to bee from rigour and crueltie in God, and the wicked doe blasphemie him in deede as a cruell iudge, when he executeth vengeance vpon them: but these heauenly and glorious, and blessed Angels, which are about the throne of his glorie, and the ministers to execute his will, and his decrees, do pronounce that all which cometh from him, is most holy and iust. Let vs learne hereby when any thing doth fall out which seemeth hard and cruell, to submit our selues, and to rest vntill we be made like to the Angels, for then shall wee see as they see, and know as they know, and proclaime as they proclaime. Next vnto his holines they set forth his omnipotent power, for they say, *Lord God almightie.* And then his eternitie, in which he is vnchangeable, hauing his being of himselfe, and giuing the being vnto all creatures: for they adde, *Which was, and which is, and which is to come.* Thus we see the nature and properties of these heauenly instruments, in which God doth set forth and magnifie his glorious maiestie. And now wee are come to the seuenth and last thing by which the high glory of GOD Almighty is in this chapter described, and that is, that hee is praised and magnified both of Angels and men. For this praise which the Angels giue being set forth hee addeth, that when the foure beastes gaue glorie, and honour, and thanks to him that sate vpon the throne, which liueth for euer and euer: *The foure and twentie Elders fell downe before him that sate on the throne, and worshipped him that liueth for euermore, & cast their crownes before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy O Lord to receiue glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy willes sake they are, and haue beene created.* These foure and twentie Elders doe represent all the Saints, both of the ancient Church, as also vnder the Gospell. And first that they fall downe before the throne, it is by a signe to testifie their reuerence in praising of him, as also to worship him: for the true Church doth worship him alone. The true beleeuers fall downe to neither saint nor angell, nor to any image or reliques, but onely vnto the most high God. In that they cast their crownes before the throne, they emptie themselues before him of all worthines to haue any glory, acknowledging that their crownes of glory

are his free gifte, without any desert or merite of theirs. For why else should they cast them downe before the throne, but to confesse that God alone is worthie of al honour and glory?

The Papists thinke themselues great friends to the Saints in heauen, and take it they must needs accept of their friendship, when they bee deuout worshippers of them, as their *Legenda aurea*, and their festiuals are stuffed full of most impudent lies and fables, what such and such a Saint did for such and such that were their deuout worshippers: but this place doth fully confute the vanitie of all such wicked and blasphemous forgeries. For what likelihood is there that the Saints in heauen, throwing downe their crownes, confessing their owne vnworthines, and ascribing all worthines of glorie and honour to GOD alone, can like well that the Lordes peculiar glory should be taken from him, and giuen vnto them? For the Church of Rome in praying to Saints, in worshipping them with diuine honour, in making them mediators, authors and patrons of saluation, rob God, and spoyle our Lord Iesus Christ of his ornaments to decke them. But let them goe, and let vs learne here that the Angels and Saintes in heauen delight that GOD onely should bee glorified, and therefore doe most highly abhorre and detest, that his glory should be taken from him and giuen to them, yea euen the very least part of it. They will be no patrons, nor they doe not thanke those that commit such abominable sacrilege. They loue those which after their example ascribe all glory, and honour, and praise to God alone through his sonne Iesus Christ. Lastly, they doe by words ascribe vnto God the Father all worthines to receiue glory, honour, and power, because that of his owne holy will hee hath created all things, and doth supporte them.

Now then to conclude, let vs couet and long with all our heart for that time when wee shall bee vnburdened, and deliuered from all corruption, and receiued into the societie and fellowship of this heauenly companie, euen of the blessed Saints and Angels, and together with them, laud and magnifie our Lord God for euer and euer, euen world without end.

Thus we see the description of the diuine maiestic, euen of the great God, from whom this reuelation commeth. Whatsoeuer things doe follow in the booke, that come to passe in the worlde, let vs remember from whose prouidence they come, and how the world is like a sea of chrystall before him.



The

The twelfth Sermon.

CAP. 5.

1. *And I saw in the right hand of him that sate upon the throne, a booke written within, and on the backside, sealed with seuen scales.*
2. *And I saw a strong Angel which preached with a loud voice, who is worthie to open the booke, and to loose the scales thereof?*
3. *And no man in heauen, nor in earth, neither vnder the earth, was able to open the booke, neither to looke thereon.*
4. *Then I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open, and to reade the booke, neither to looke thereon.*
5. *And one of the Elders said vnto me, weep not, behold that lion which is of the tribe of Iuda, that roote of David, hath obtained to open the booke, and to loose the seuen scales thereof.*
6. *Then I beheld, and loe in the midst of the throne, and of the foure beasts, and in the midst of the Elders, stood a lambe as though he had beene killed, which had seuen hornes and seuen eyes, which are the seuen spirites of God, sent into all the world.*
7. *And hee came and tooke the booke out of the right hand of him that sate upon the throne.*
8. *And when he had taken the booke, the foure beasts, and the foure and twentie Elders fell downe before the lambe, hauing euery one harpes, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the Saints.*
9. *And they sung a new song, saying, thou art worthy to take the booke and to open the scales thereof, because thou wast killed, and hast redeemed vs to God by thy blood, out of euery kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.*
10. *And hast made vs vnto our God kings and priests, and wee shall raigne vpon the earth.*
11. *Then I beheld, and I heard the voice of many Angels round about the throne, and about the beasts and the elders, and there were ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousand thousands.*
12. *Saying with a loud voice, worthy is the lambe that was killed, to receiue power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and praise.*
13. *And all the creatures which are in heauen, and on the earth, and vnder the earth, and in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, praise, and honour, and glory, and power be vnto him that sitteth vpon the throne, and vnto the lambe for euermore.*
14. *And the foure beasts said, Amen, and the foure and twentie Elders fell downe and worshipped him that liueth for euermore.*

IN the former chapter, wee haue had the description of the high maiestic of God the father almighty, who gaue this reuelation to his Sonne Iesus Christ. In this chapter

chapter is set forth vnto vs, first a description of this reuelation: then next a description of the Lord Iesus Christ, who receiueth it at the hand of his father: and lastly here is set forth the most glorious prayse, which by the chiefe Angels, by the Saints, by the multitude of Angels, and by all creatures in heauen, in earth, and vnder the earth, and in the sea, is giuen to Christ. Of these three partes consisteth the whole chapter. Let vs come to the words as they be set downe: *I saw* (saith he) *in the right hand of him that sate vpon the throne, a booke written within, and on the backside, sealed with seuen seales.* The booke as appeareth afterward by the opening of the seales, is this reuelation. All the secrets reuealed in it come from the will, the counsell and decree of the most high God, and are ordered by his prouidence, and therefore are by vision shewed to *Iohn*, to bee in his right hand. This right hand of the Lord doth all, this right hand of the Lorde bringeth mightie things to passe, this right hand of the Lord hath the preheminence: this is one poynt of the description.

Then further, that they be written in a booke, it is to shew, that they bee decreed, and determined so firmly and so constantly in the counsell of God, that none of them shall faile, but come forth, and bee fulfilled in their season. That the booke is written within, and on the backside, we are giuen to vnderstand, that there be many things to be reuealed: for it is not onely a whole booke, wherein they be contained, but also written as full as might be, both within, and on the backside: they be many great things which should fall out in the world, from the time that *Iohn* receiued this prophesie, to the day of iudgement. That it is sealed with seuen seales, we are taught, that they bee the counsels and secrets knowne onely to the most high God, vntill it pleased him to reueale them by his sonne: for the number of the seales doth shew, that they be perfectly sealed vp. No mights, no thrones, no principalities, or dominations in Heauen, did or could knowe any of those things which are written in this booke, before the seales be opened.

Now that wee may know, that Iesus Christ, the onely begotten sonne of God, which is from the bosome of the father, the mediator betweene God and man, is the onely reuealer and opener of his fathers will: here is proclamation made vnto all creatures in heauen and earth, which is a parte of the description of this booke, that onely the Lord Iesus is found worthie to open the seales thereof. For hee saith, *I sawe a strong Angell that preached with a loude voyce, who is worthie to open the booke, and to loose the seales thereof: And no man in Heauen, nor in earth, neither vnder the earth, was able to open the booke, neither to looke thereon.* Let vs then know for certaine, that our blessed Lord Iesus hath alwaies had this glorie peculiar to himselfe alone, that he is the opener of the counsels of God. Hee is the eternall word, *Iohn* 1. vers. 1. He is the wisdom of the father from euertlasting, and before all creatures, as *Salomon* setteth him forth, *Proverb.* 8. vers. 22. *No man hath seene God at any time, the onely begotten sonne which is in the bosome of the father, he hath declared him,* *Iohn* 1. vers. 18. Hee sent his spirit vpon the Apostles, as hee had also of olde time giuen him to his Prophets, and so the holy Scriptures were written.

Here doe the Papists lay in for their purgatorie, and for their *Limbus patrum*: in

deede the learned Papists doe rather defend both *Limbus* and Purgatorie by tradition, then by Scripture, but yet where there may the least shew be made of Scripture, they take hold: as the Rhemists vpon these words, that none in Heauen, nor in earth, nor vnder the earth, was found worthy to open the booke, inferre thus, *Hee speaketh not of the damned in hell, of whome there could bee no question: but of the faithfull in Abrahams bosome, and in purgatorie.* The force of their reason is in this, that touching the damned in hell, there could be no question, whether any among them could be found worthie to open the booke: and so there needed no proclamation to be made to finde any there. Therefore vnder the earth, is to bee vnderstood (say they) of some other companie, as of the Saints in *Abrahams bosome*, which they call *Limbus Patrum*, or of the tormented soules in purgatorie.

O foolish ridiculous Papists, which seeke in the cleere light to blinde the world with such fooleries: first why doe yee here mention the faithfull in *Abrahams bosome*, when ye teach that Christ did fetch them forth, and carie them with him to heauen, before this time? Did hee leaue some behinde in limbo, or is heauen vnder the earth? And then when ye say there could no question be made of the damned in hell, whether any there were worthie, I praye yee then what question could be made of those in purgatorie? could it be doubted that among those, which (ye say) lie in those horrible torments of purgatorie, peradventure some one might be found worthie to open the booke? If there could no one be found among the Angels and Saints in Heauen, could there then be question about them in purgatorie? Why doe ye not see, that this proclamation is made, not for any question, whether there were some Angell or Saint worthie (for it was knowne and out of doubt there was none) but to teach vs, that in deede, among all creatures, in heauen or earth or wheresoeuer, there is no one worthie, but that this honour and worthines is peculiar to the mediator Iesus Christ. Thus much I thought good to note of their peruerse follic.

It followeth now in the text, *That Iohn wept much, because no man was found worthie to open the booke, to reade it, or to looke thereon.* Saint *Iohn* did not doubt but that in this booke were written such things as were very good and profitable for the Church to know: and when he saw there was none found worthie to open it, he sorrowed and lamented much, for feare that the Church should bee deprived of such a benefite. He loued Iesus Christ deere lie, and therefore he loued the sheepe and lambes of Christ which he hath redeemed with his blood, most feruently co-ucting that they might be instructed, and fed with all knowledge that might bring them vnto saluation. This was a good shepherd, those are nothing like him, which care not though the people ouer whome they haue the charge, bee ignorant in the word of God. Saint *Iohn* did weepe for feare that the things in the booke should not be knowne: they weepe that the people come to any knowledge, and so espye their wickednes, here is great oddes.

Then next is shewed how *Iohn* is comforted touching this matter: *For one of the elders said vnto him, weep not, beholde, that Lion which is of the tribe of Iuda, that roote of Dauid, hath obtained to open the booke, and to loose the seuen seales thereof.* The

The strong Angell then did not preach with a loude voyce, to finde if there was any other worthie to open the booke, as a matter that might bee, but to make it knowne, that none in deede was worthie but Christ Iesus alone. The elder calleth him that Lion of the tribe of Iuda, respecting that prophesie of *Iacob* in blessing his sonne *Iuda*: for he setteth him forth as a young Lion that should take the pray, and as a most stately Lion, which lying downe to sleepe, none dare rayse him vp, Gen. 49. vers. 9. Now it is most certaine, that whatsoeuer dignitie, and glorie is ascribed to that tribe, it is in respect of Christ, who came of the same. He calleth him also that roote of *Dauid*: for according to the fleshe hee was the sonne of *Dauid*. But the phrase of speech is from the Prophet *Esay*, for the Lorde did threaten such calamitie vnto the Iewes, *Esay* 10. that hee compareth their cutting downe, to the cutting downe of the trees in a wood: and then ministring comfort, chap. 11. least all might seeme to faile, he saith that out of the stocke of *Ishai*, who was the father of *Dauid*, and out of his rootes shoulde a branch spring vp, vpon which the spirite of the Lorde should rest, the spirite of wisdom and vnderstanding, the spirite of counsell and power, the spirite of knowledge, and of the feare of the Lorde. This mighty Lorde in battaile, this strong redeemer hath gotten the victorie, and obtayned to open the booke, and to loose the seuen scales thereof. Now *Iohn* hath his eyes opened, and seeth him that is worthy to open the booke: and that which appertaineth to the description of the booke being finished, now hee describeth the opener. For hee saith, *Then I beheld, and loe in the midst of the throne, and of the foure beastes, and in the midst of the elders stood a lambe as though he had been killed, which had seuen hornes, and seuen eyes, which are the seuen spirits of God, sent forth into all the worlde.* First, in this description it may seeme somewhat strange, that hearing of a Lion which had ouercome; now he seeth a Lambe, what difference there is betwene these two, that is to saye, a Lion, and a Lambe, euery man knoweth. But wee must consider that our Lord Iesus, in respect of the enemies, namely the diuell, death, and sinne, hath shewed himselfe as a mightie conquering Lion, euen that Lord mightie in battaile: for he vanquished and spoyled them, & tooke from out of their iawes the pray, euen the captiues whome he redeemed fro vnder their power: but in respect of his redeemed, he is that lambe of God which taketh away the sinnes of the world. Moreover, we must note that he neuer shewed that mightie power of the Lion more, then when as the vnspotted Lambe hee was sacrificed vpon the crosse. The Lambe slaine, ouercommeth all by his blood: then doe not meruaile that the Lion of the tribe of Iuda, appeareth in the likenes of a Lambe. This Lambe which was slaine, standeth in the midst of the throne, not as the foure beastes are said to be in the midst of the throne, & round about the throne, which are ministers, but he as being of equall maiestie with God the father, as Saint *Paul* teacheth, Phil. 2. Hee hath all fulnes of power, and of wisdom, of sight, and knowledge, which is resembled by his seuen hornes, and seuen eyes: which also are here expounded to be his mightie spirit, euen the holy Ghost, whom he sent downe into the world, whose manifold giftes are powred forth, and bestowed vpon the Church.

Now

Now followeth how this Lambe taketh the booke: for he saith, *And hee came and tooke the booke out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.* And now followeth the worshipping, the reioycing and praying, wherewith both Angels and men, and all creatures doe worship and magnifie the Lambe. Hee beginneth first with those chiefe Angels, and with the foure and twentie Elders. *And when he had taken the booke (saith he) the foure beastes, and the foure and twentie elders fell downe before the Lambe.* Then this Lambe of God, is God, yea God ouer all to be blessed for euer, otherwise how should both men and Angels fall downe and worship him? Is it not saide thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serue? Matth. 4. Consider then how great hee is, of whome it is said, let all the Angels of God worship him, Psalm. 97. vers. 7. Hebrew. 1. Great is the glory of the Angels in Heauen, and yet their greatnes and glorie is so farre vnder his, that they worship him, euen with the highest worship. And let not vs then giue away any part of his worship vnto any creature, for that is a most horrible wickednes of the papists. It is said they *had euery one harpes, and that they sung a new song.* This is to set forth the ioy and reioycing, euen that spirituall ioy, which all the faithful haue through Christ. In deede it is great ioy which is wrought by him: which these musically instruments, and new song doe signifie. This ioy remaineth still as fresh as at the first, and therefore he saith, they sung a new song, for a song is euer the more delightful while it is new. What the matter of this new song is, we shall see afterward: he saith, they had also golden vials, full of sweete odors, which are the prayers of the Saints. The meaning of this is opened by the holy Ghost himselfe, by expounding that these odors are the prayers of the saints, whereby we see how precious vessels the hearts of true beleeuers are before God, and how sweete the prayers are which are offered vp vnto him out of them: for ye see the vials are of pure gold, and that is the most precious mettall: the prayers offered in them are sweete odors. They did burne incense in the time of the lawe, which was sweete, not that GOD was delighted with the sinell of any corporall thing, but spirituall things were represented thereby, euen the precious sweetnes of true prayers offered vp by his people. And therefore the Prophet *Dauid* desired that his prayer might be directed before the Lord as incense, Psalm. 141. We are soone cast downe, and fainte in our prayers, as if God had no delight in them: because he often seemeth to turne away his face, and not to regarde them, while wee aske and obtaine not at the first or second time.

Let vs therefore for our encouragement remember they be sweet odours, when they be offaith offered vp in Christ. Thinke vpon this place, when we thinke prayer is little worth. But we teach that prayers are to bee offered to God through the mediation of Iesus Christ onely, and that the Saints and Angels are not to haue any part of this honour, as that we should pray vnto them to bee mediators and aduocates for vs. And here the Papists draw forth (as they thinke) a strong argument to confute vs, and to proue that the saints in heauen doe offer vp the prayers of men in earth which seeke vnto them. It is much that our Rhemistes will confesse that the faithful bee saints while they liue vpon the earth: for the ignorant popish sort doe

doe for the most part scorne it. And now touching their argument from this place: It is not sayd that the Saints in heauen offer vp the prayers of the Saints in earth, or that these 24. elders had their golden vials full of sweete odours which were not their owne: for these odours were their owne prayers. This may seeme strange, for doe the Saints in heauen pray? I answer, that whether the Saints in heauen do pray or how they pray, I will not curiously enquire, but I doubt nothing at all, but that these twentie foure elders doe represent the whole Church, euen all the saints both in heauen and in earth. For if they did represent onely the Apostles and Prophets, how should they say, *Thou hast redeemed vs vnto God by thy blood, out of euery kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation?* And now for the matter of their new song, these bee the wordes, *Thou art wo: thie to take the booke, & to open the seales thereof, because thou wast killed, and hast redeemed vs vnto God by thy blood, out of euery kindred, & tongue, & people, & nation, & hast made vs vnto our God kings & priestes, & we shall raigne vpon the earth.* This excellent & most noble song, first proclaimeth the praise and worthines of the blessed lambe of God Iesus Christ, to be alone the opener of Gods secrets to the Church. *Thou art worthie to take the booke, and to open the seales thereof.* There could none in heauen, nor in the earth, nor vnder the earth be found that was worthie to open the booke or to looke thereon besides him alone: great is the worthines then of the lambe, aboue and beyond all creatures.

Then followeth the confirmation of this worthines, by his humble obedience to his Father, his loue and benefits to the Church: For as Saint *Paul* saith, he humbled himselfe and became obedient to death, euen to the death of the crosse. And here they say, because thou wast killed. How great loue this was towards miserable sinners, to giue himselfe vp for them to the tormentes of death, no tongue can expresse. And what fruite and benefite came by his bloudie passion to the Church, is set forth in the words that follow. It standeth of two parts, the first is the deliuerance from our bondage and miserie: for being vanquished by death, subiect to the tyrannie of the deuill, and vader the curse of God, hee hath fully deliuered vs: and that the 24. elders declare, in saying, *Thou hast redeemed vs vnto God by thy blood out of euery kindred, and tongue, &c.* Then the gentiles also, euen the people that sate in darkenes, and in the shadow of death, haue seene this great light. Let vs alwayes sing this new song: let vs with glad hearts set forth the worthines of the lambe, which hath redeemed and bought vs with his most precious blood. And not onely this, but also (which is the other part of the benefite the Church receiueth by his death) that hee hath exalted vs vnto very high dignitie and glory. For they say, *Thou hast made vs kings, and priestes vnto our God, and we shall raigne on the earth.* It were a wonderfull great benefite to be drawn out of sinne, from the tormentes of hell, from the power of the deuill, and of death, and to bee left in a state without either ioy or paine: but he hath not onely deliuered from those former, but also hath so sanctified and clensed vs from our vncleannes, as that we are made holy priestes to God yea sonnes of the most high, and so great kings, and shall raigne in heauenly glory for euer. For although it be said, we shall raigne vpon the earth,

yet

yet this kingdome is heauenly: For the Saints shall with Christ receiue the inheritance, and be Lords, and kings both of heauen and earth. There shall be new heauens, and a new earth, in which righteousnes shall dwell, as the holy Ghost sayth, 2. Pet. 3. 13. The Lord giue vs to be of that number which the 24 elders doe represent, that sing this new song vnto the Lambe. It is euen the most ioyfull and the most blessed thing vnder heauen, to behold the worthines of Christ, to feele his benefites, and to set forth his praise in the same, with spirituall mirth and gladnes, together with his Saints, that doe loue his name. And in very deede if our eies were opened to see a little into the bottome of that gulfe of miseries, out of which hee hath redeemed vs by his blood, and also in some sort to behold the top of that glory vnto which he hath exalted vs, we could not be stayed from singing this new song. The Papists by this place, because it is sayd, thou art worthy, &c. because thou wast killed, affirme that Christ by his death did merite the high glory in which he is exalted. Most foolish they are in this, for Christ God and man is but one person, and although for a time he humbled himselfe and tooke vpon him the shape of a seruant, yet the highest glory was his owne euen then, and no robbery euen then to be equal with God as *Paul* teacheth, Philip. 2. Therefore vnles they will with one sort of heretikes deny the personall vnion of the two natures in Christ, or with an other sorte deny his equalitie in glory with the Father, how shall they stand in this, that Christ by his death did merite his glory? In the next place the infinite multitude of heauenly Angels, about the throne, the foure beastes, and the elders, euen a thousand times tenne thousand, and thousand thousands, doe with a loud voice set forth the worthines of the lambe. *Worthie is the lambe (say they) that was killed to receiue power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and praise.* O most sacrilegious papists, which robbe him of that which all the Angels in heauen doe ascribe vnto him. Let vs ioyne with the heauenly companie, and not with the Papists.

Lastly, Saint *John* heareth all the creatures in heauen and earth, vnder the earth, and in the sea yeelding praise and glory to God almightie, and to the lambe for euermore. This is to bee vnderstood of the very heauens and the earth themselves, & the seas with all their furniture: as the Sunne, the Moone, the starres, and all dumbe creatures below. For as they bee all subiect to the bondage of corruption, and in their kind doe groane and trauaile in paine, waiting when the sonnes of God shall bee reuealed, for then they shall also bee restored vnto libertie, Rom. 8. so in their kind they laud and praise the Lord God, and the lambe for their restitution, vnto which praise of theirs, the chiefe Angels subscribe in saying Amen, and the 24. elders, euen the whole Church fall downe and worship him that liueth for euermore. Then seeing the chiefe Angels, the whole Church, the common multitude of Angels, and all creatures worship, magnifie, and praise the lambe of God with so great ioye and reioycing, let vs couet to be of this number, and euen set our delight to honour and praise him both by our words and deeds. This shall be our happines and glorie for euermore.

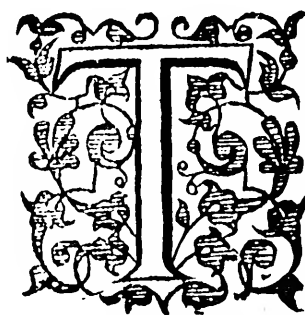
The



The thirteenth Sermon.

CAP. 6.

1. After I beheld when the lambe had opened one of the seales, and I heard one of the foure beasts as it were the noise of thunder, say, come and see.
2. Therefore I beheld, and loe there was a white horse, and he that sate on him had a bow, and a crowne was giue vnto him, and he went forth conquering that he might ouercome.
3. And when hee had opened the second seale, I heard the second beast saye, come and see.
4. And there went out an other horse that was red, and power was giuen to him that sate thereon, to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another, and there was giuen vnto him a great sword.
5. And when he had opened the third seale, I heard the third beast say, come and see: then I beheld, and loe a blacke horse, and he that sate thereon had balances in his hand.
6. And I heard a voice in the middest of the foure beasts, say, a measure of wheate for a penie, and three measures of barlie for a penie, and oyle and wine haue thou not.
7. And when he had opened the fourth seale, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, come and see.
8. And I looked, and beheld a pale horse, & his name that sate on him was death, and hell followed after him, and power was giuen vnto them ouer the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.



He booke sealed with seuen seales, did the lambe take out of the right hand of the most high God, his Father, none in heauen or in earth, or vnder the earth besides him alone, being worthy to looke thereon: and now he openeth the seales thereof, and so discloseth vnto his seruant Iohn, the mysteries contained therein, that he might deliuer them to the Church for the instruction, and vse of all Gods seruants. When he had therefore opened the first seal, Iohn saith he beheld it, & one of the foure beasts, with a mightie and glorious voice, euen as it had been of thunder, willet him to come and see. And when he looked, there was a white horse, and hee that sate thereon had

had a bow, and a crowne was giuen vnto him, and he went forth conquering, that he might ouercome.

What euery part of this vision doth represent, and signifie, we are to consider: as namely the horse, his colour, he that sate on him, the bow, the crowne, and his going forth conquering that he might ouercome. Some doe take it that vnder the figure of these is set forth, how God for the wicked rebellion of the world, will most mightily and speedily strike them with the arrowes of pestilence, and so triumph ouer them by a conquest. But they doubtlesse are deceiued, which so expound this vision, as the text it selfe will make euident. It is a white horse, marke that, for the white colour in the holy scriptures doth neuer figure out that which is dolefull, as the pestilence is a thing very dolefull, but it representeth light, innocencie, puritie, ioy and gladnes. Againe, as we shall see, here follow shadowed out vnder the other three horses and their riders horrible iudgements, which are executed vpon the world in the displeasure of God, for despising his maruailous mercie and kindness offered by Christ. Among which iudgements the pestilence is not the least. Therefore in the opening of the first seale, by the white horse, and his rider, by the bow and crowne, and by the going forth to conquer, is represented a farre other matter, and that is the glad tidings of the gospell which the Lorde Iesus brought, and which he sent abroad by his Apostles and ministers, and conquered, and subdued the nations vnder him, and which he will still send forth to the end of the worlde. In this exposition, taking this figure to represent the going forth of the gospell, euery part doth most fitly agree, euen by the phrases of the scriptures. Yea the whole matter of this vision is framed, as it may seeme by the agreement of the speeches out of the 45. Psal. where the mariage of Christ to his Church, is figured out by the mariage of king Salomon with the daughter of Pharaoh. Thus are the wordes set downe, *Giue thy sword vpon thy thigh, O thou mightie one, the sword of thy glory, and comely beantie. And with thy comely beantie ride on prosperously, for the busines of truth, and of meeke righteousness, that thy right hand may teach thee terrible things. By thy sharpe arrowes in the heart of the kings enemies, the people shall fall vnder thee.* In these wordes of the Prophet is set forth the goodly and glorious conquest, and victorie of Christ ouer the nations of the worlde, subduing them vnder him by the gospell, where hee rideth forth, shooteth his arrowes, and getteth the victorie. But let vs compare the wordes in both places together more particularly. In this place the prophet speaking of Christ, saith, *With thy comely beantie, ride on prosperously, &c.* and Saint Iohn at the opening of the first seale, seeth a white horse and one sitting vpon him, which goeth forth conquering. If we respect the colour of this horse which is white, doth it not represent the comely beantie and glorie of Christ and his gospell? If any wil obiect that the Psalme doth not speake of the colour of his horse: I answer, that in the 19. chapter of this booke, Christ is described riding vpon a white horse, and all the armies of heauen following him vpon white horses, which is agreeable to this. The horse and the riding forth, doe set out vnto vs in deede, and represent most fitly that with maruailous swiftnes the light of the glorious gospell should be caryed and spread ouer the kingdomes of the world. For

it is a great wonder to consider, how farre ouer mightie kingdomes and nations of the heathen people, within a few years after his ascension, the Lorde Iesus was preached, and his doctrine was of multitudes embraced. He rode forth in deede prosperously, and swiftly vpon this white horse, euen the ministerie of his gospell, for the busines of truth, and of meeke righteousness, and his right hand full of power, wrought fearfull things. In the Psalme, the Prophet mentioneth no bowe, but sharpe arrowes: and contrariwise here Saint *Iohn* seeth him haue a bow, but mentioneth no arrowes. Let not this seeme to make any difference, the bow and the arrowes go together, & so the matter is al one, for the bow is not to any purpose without arrowes, which S. *Iohn* speaketh of here, and the arrowes fixed in the hart of the kings enemies, which the Prophet speaketh of there, are shot out of a bow. Here Saint *Iohn* seeth him haue a crown giuen him, which betokeneth the victorie which he getteth ouer the inhabitants of the world with his bowe and arrowes. The Prophet setteth it forth in these wordes, that by his sharpe arrowes being fixed in the heart of the kings enemies, the people fall downe vnder him. Then here is the crowne of victorie, here is the conquest and the subduing of the people by the bow and arrowes. These arrowes, euen these most sharpe and deepe pearcing arrowes of the Gospell, by which the world hath been subdued vnto Christ, Saint *Iohn* hath not shewed vnto him in vision into what part of man they are shot: but the words of the Psalme doe shew, for in it the Prophet saith, these sharpe arrowes sticke in the heart of the kings enemies. And in very deede all the arrowes of the Gospell which Christ shooteth out of this bowe, which is euen the tongues of his ministers, doe strike the very hearts of men, and doe sticke in them, yea they pearce into all the secret places of the heart. These bee noble arrowes, this is a worthy Bowe, and here is a glorious victorie. But the question may bee moued here why the Prophet speaketh as if these arrowes were shot: and did sticke onely in the heart of the kings enemies, that is, in the heart of the enemies of Christ, the king of kings. And moreouer it may bee demaunded what victorie or conquest the gospell obtaineth ouer such as remaine obstinate enemies vnto Christ, which reiect, blaspheme, and persecute the same. First, we are to consider that before such time as we be in our hearts sticken with the arrowes of the gospell, and conuerted thereby to God, wee be all of vs by nature the kings enemies, as we may see, Rom. 5. 10. Secondly, wee must obserue, that this victorie of Christ is of two sorts, in respect of two waies that the people doe fall vnder him. For they whose hearts these sharpe arrowes doe strike and pearce vnto their conuersion, as the sweete sauour of life vnto life, and the power of God vnto saluation, they fall downe vnder him with willing and glad hearts, to worship, to honour, to obey, and magnifie him as their most gracious and blessed king. A most happie victorie. These sharpe arrowes doe not hurt them, but the faster, and the deeper they sticke in their hearts, the better it is for them. Yea they conuert and it is most comfortable vnto them, when they feelee them pearce decept to kil the old man. In these the arrowes may be said to be in the hart of the kings enemies, not that they remaine still enemies, but were before. There is an other sort, into whose hearts also these arrowes are shot and do wound them most deep-

ly,

ly, but yet doe not conuert them, but are the sauour of death vnto death. These doe feelee the strokes, they rage and are wonderfully moued, they resist, and will not yeeld vnto him that hath shot them, they will none of his yoke, they will not stoupe to obey him, they will breake his bands asunder, they reiect his lawes, they will not haue him to rule ouer them, they wraastle and struggle with all their might, and yet the arrowes sticke fast in their hearts, and by no meanes they can plucke them out, nor heale those deepe and deadly woundes which they make. These doe seeme not to be subdued, nor to fall vnder Christ, but the truth is, his arrowes doe wound them deadly, and he doth triumph ouer them. Of this Saint *Paul* glorieth in the Lord with thanksgiuing, 2. Cor. 2. vers. 14. 15. 16. For he saith, God made them alwayes triumph, both in those that are saued, and in those that perish, &c. Consider then I pray yee, that seeing the rider vpon this white horse with his bowe will conquer all, to saue the one part as his subiectes which turne vnto him, and to subdue the other as wicked rebels to their destruction, how good it is that we embrace the gospell with all loue and gladnes of heart, and so bee of those that come willingly and frankly, as hee speaketh, Psalm. 110. Let the other feare as much as they will at the true preachers of the gospell, yet the arrowes which they shoote sting them so sore, and sticke so fast in their heart, that they biting at them cannot plucke them forth, nor heale the woundes wherewith they haue wounded them vnto eternall death. But why is it said that he goeth forth conquering, that he might ouercome? is it meant that the worke is still in hand? yea doubtlesse. For albeit the holy Apostles of Christ had at that time when *Iohn* receiued this prophecie, conuerted great multitudes in many kingdomes, yet the deuill made still all the force hee could to suppress the truth. The Emperours, the kings, the princes, the Iudges, the Philosophers, and all idolatrous people which stood vpon the auncient religion of their forefathers, made fierce warre against them, and yet this white horse and his rider proceed and breake through them, yea the Lord with his sharpe arrowes from the mouth of his twelue Apostles, most mightily bringeth them vnder. There be manie enemies at this day and shall be euen to the worlds end, (for the deuill will neuer giue ouer vntill he receiue his finall iudgement) and therefore this white horse and his rider still goe forth: and many by him are dayly conuerted and fall downe to Christ, and the enemies are wounded with deadly woundes which they shall neuer recover, yea euen the whole kingdome of Antichrist. Beloued consider this vision, the worlde is bent against the gospell, great power is made, great crueltie is exercised, and terrour euery where to oppresse it, but this rider will conquer all, let vs therefore boldly cleaue vnto it. Thus much for the opening of the first scale.

At the opening of the second scale, hee heard the voice of the second beast say, come and see. We haue scene that there was figured out, vnder the white horse and his rider in opening the former scale, the most ioyfull thing that euer God sent into the worlde, euen the Lord Iesus with his glorious gospell, running through the nations of the world. Now in the next three scales being opened, there come forth three other horses and their riders, of other colours, to represent other kind of matters, euen the horrible punishments, and fearefull iudgements of God, which in

K

his

his wrath and displeasure he poureth forth vpon the wicked world for despising his great kindnes offered, for hating, and blaspheming, and railing vpon his gospell, and for persecuting his Church. For the greater the kindnes of God hath beene in giuing his onely sonne vnto vs, with the fulnes of all heauenly treasures, to enrich, and to make vs truly blessed for euer; the greater and the more execrable is the ingratitude, and wicked contempt of the blind world, in hating and reiecting the same. And from hence it ensueth, that more fore and grievous plagues haue ouerspread the inhabitants of the earth since the comming of Christ, then in former ages.

In the first of these then, here commeth forth a red horse, hee that rideth vpon him hath power giuen him to take peace from the earth that they might kill one another, and there was giuen him a great sword. This representeth the bloudie warres, tumults and cruell slaughters among the people of the earth. This plague should swiftly spread it selfe, and therefore commeth also on horsebacke. The colour of this horse declareth what hee doth bring, for hee is red, that is all blood, and very slaughter it selfe. The rider vpon this red horse, is the diuell himselfe: for hee is the most fit for such a turne: He is a cruell murtherer from the beginning, hee delighteth in blood, in hatred and malice, and the same he worketh among men. The righteous God of vengeance giueth him power to take peace from the earth, that men may one kill another, and to this ende a great sword is giuen him for to murder and kill withall. He stirreth vp hatred among kings, he inflameth the wrath of princes and great men, he raiseth vp tumults and seditions among the rude people, he taketh away all sense of humanitie out of the hearts of men, and filleth them with such crueltie, that they can without any mercie or compassion shead the blood one of another. A man is not able almost in his whole life (if hee vnderstoode all languages and should do nothing else) to reade all the warres and horrible slaughters that haue been made vpon infinite multitudes in all countries, since the time of the Gospell. And yet the quantitie of the blood that hath bin shed in killing one another, euen that the riuers sometimes haue been coloured therewith, is not so strange, as to consider with what savage crueltie it hath been done. Many Captaines and souldiers haue been so cruell and hard hearted, that they haue had no compassion vpon olde men, nor vpon women, nor children: but haue thrust their swords and daggers into them, as little moved, as if they had thrust them into a stacke of hay. This fellow vpon the red horse hath played his part throughly in the world, and doth stil euen at this day. This bloudie cruell tyrant is fit for the world: for God hath giuen a king of peace, vnder whom we should liue, which rideth vpon the white horse. The world will none of him, and therefore this bloudie tyrant the diuell doth receiue power ouer them.

But it may here bee sayd, that these bloudie warres in time of the Gospell, doe seeme to be disagreeing, yea quite contrary to that which the Prophets of old did vtter touching the state of the world vnder the kingdome of Christ. For they describe, as I may speake, a golden world. The Prophet Esay, chap. 11. speaking of the branch that should spring out of the roote of Iesse, and how the spirit of the

Lord

Lord should rest vpon him, addeth such a description of the cruell beasts and venomous serpents putting off their crueltie and venime, as if there should no noisome thing remaine among men. Looke what hee sayth of the wolfe dwelling with the lambe, the leopard with the kid, the lion with the calfe, and a childe to guide them, the beare with the cow, and their young ones together, the yong child putting his hande vpon the hole of the Aspe and Cockatrice. And in the second chapter he sayth, that the law shall goe out of Sion, and the word of the Lord out of Ierusalem: and shall iudge among the Gentiles, and they shall cut their swords into spades, and their speares into sicthes: nation shal not lift vp a sword against nation, neither shall they learne to warre any more. How can these agree? Wee are to consider for the reconciling of these things, that our Lord Iesus is the king of peace, he is the reconciler, and the restorer of all things. Before the fume of man, the beasts did not one dissent from another, nor had any deuouring nature in them any way to hurt. Christs kingdome is now but begun, and when it shall be perfected, all hurting shall be taken away. Moreouer, men by nature are cruell and rauening, euen like wolues and beares: when they are regenerate by the Gospell, looke how farre the power of Christ beareth sway in them, so farre they cease from those cruell affections, and become tame and meeke. When Christ shall fully raigne in men, then they shall be perfect. Behold then how the Prophets doe set forth what Christ bringeth, and what meekenes and peace hee worketh in the chosen, what mindes they beare, and what affection they be of, which are regenerate. And were it not the fault of men, all strife and warres should cease indeede, and none should hurt at all. The diuell & his are in such a rage against Christ, that all is on a broyle. The faithfull also are so vnperfect, that sometimes they are at sharpe contention. And least any should imagine that the words of the Prophets were so to be taken, as that at the comming of the Messias all should become so peaceable, the Lord himselfe, euen the Messias, foretelleth of this horse and his rider, with his great sword: Think not (sayth he) that I am come to send peace vpon the earth, I am not come to send peace but a sword, Matth. 10. vers. 34. These horses goe both forth stil in the world, & the rider vpon the white horse doth stil conquer, euen in the midst of the bloudie swords, and tumults. Let this suffice for the second seale.

When the lambe opened the third seale, he heard the third beast say, come and see: and loe a blacke horse, and he that sate on him had balances in his hand. Vnder this figure is set forth dearth and famine. The horse is blacke, which is a sad and dolefull colour: for famine is full of sorrow. The balances are to shewe that men shall measure and stint themselves in their eating, to make that little which they haue, reach farre and last long. In time of plentie wee see how wastfull men are, not regarding measure: but when famine doth oppresse, then euery man hath a little appoynted him by measure, least they should consume in fewe dayes that which should last many dayes, and so vtterly want and perish before any plentie could come. Therefore when the Lord threatned grievous famine to the Israelites, he sayth that tenne women shall bake together in one oven, and shall deliuer forth

K 2

bread

bread by waight, Leuit. 16. When a citie is straightly besieged, and the victuals very scarce, euery man hath a little measure, or a little waight for his daily allowance, that so they may for a time hold out. To represent this plague of famine vpon the world, here is one vpon a blacke horse with balances in his hand. Yea further to declare the grienousnes of the famine, a voyce cometh from the throne of God, shewing what is decreed, and that is, a measure of wheate for a penie, and three measures of barley for a penie, and wine and oyle hurt thou not. The measure here spoken of is a *Chenix*. Writers doe say it was so much as would serue a man bread-corne for one day. And the Romane penie vnder Domitian was almost seauen pence of our money: and at that time the labouring man did worke for a penie a day. Then see what straight here is, when a man had wife and children to sustaine by his trauaile, and the wages or hire for his dayes worke would little more then buy him bread-corne for himselfe alone, if hee did eate wheate bread, and three mens bread-corne, if he would eate barley bread: for how should his labours sustaine with meate and apparell, his wife and children? And for the next clause touching wine and oyle, I take it fitter to say, thou shalt not doe vnjustly, then to say, thou shalt not hurt. For this horseman goeth forth not to hurt the fruites of the earth, but to represent a famine. And then the sense is this, in plentie he that will sell a little wine or oyle for a great price, doth deale vnjustly: but in famine and extreame penurie, he that selleth a little wine or a little oyle for a great deale of money, doth not deale vnjustly, when through the scarcitie the price can be no lower, the scarcitie compelleth him. Let vs consider what a grienous plague, an extreame famine is. The Prophet Ieremiah in his Lamentations, sayth, They bee better that are killed with the sword, then they that dye of famine. Also hee there, and the Scripture in other places sheweth, that in fore famine, the women haue eaten their owne children. Alas what grieve doe they sustaine, before it come to this, that mothers can be brought to kill and eate their owne children? What are the bowels of a mother to her own childre, yea as Jeremy saith, to the childre of their span (not of a span long) but to those which the mother whē they be little ones doth span with her hands, dancing thē, and nursing thē vp? A man would think no extremitie could be so sore, as that it should driue her to kill & eate them: and yet we reade of diuers that did. And remēber how when we haue felt but some scarcitie of corne (other things being plentiful) how sore it hath pinched many? Now, if I should stand to shew at large when, and how the Lord fulfilled this vision, by plaging the world with sore & grienous famines, I should wearie ye: onely I will recite some few examples. As first, about the yere of our Lord 316. the world was miserably afflicted with famine, pestilence, & with sundrie sorts of calamities, after they had cruelly murdered heapes of Christians. In the yere of our Lord 537. there was a very great famine ouer y world. In 604. there was also a grienous famine, but chiefly in Italy, where Rome standeth. Also there was a famine very great and sore ouer the world in the yere 946. Likewise in the yere of our Lord 1006. there was a strong famine in all countries. In France, which hath been a great vpholder of the sea of Rome, this blacke horse came often, and his rider with balances. For in 660. the

land

land was so sore afflicted with famine, that the King solde the vessels of gold and siluer, and other pretious things in the Churches to relieue the poore. In 898. so grienous, that men were readie to eate one another. Also 931. 945. 1233. Also in 1235. the famine was so grienous in France, that men were constrained to eate grasse. And likewise in 1351. What should I mention the famines that haue been in Germanie, in Spayne, in Italy, in Polonia, in Denmarke, in Phrygia, at Venice, at Rome, in England, and in many countries? Surely God hath often sent forth this blacke horse, and besides he hath sent that famine of the word which Amos speaketh of, and the young men and the beautifull virgins haue perished with thirst.

And now followeth the opening of the fourth scale, at which there cometh forth a pale horse, and he that sate on him is called death, and hell followeth. This figureth out the pestilence, and pestilent diseases which God in wrath sendeth vpon the world, and killeth. Men that dye of the pestilence looke pale, and therefore here is a pale horse, and death vpon him. A dolefull thing is the pestilence, and this pale horse hath and doth runne often through the world. I will mention but some few. In 173. there was a great pestilence ouer the world. Also 254. 1092. 1157. Also in 1305. 1347. 1428. these were pestilences generall ouer the world. About the yere of our Lord 1315. there was such a pestilence that writers report, the third part of men were consumed of it. I will not stand to shewe the horrible pestilences that haue been in seuerall countries and cities, and how often: for it would be a matter infinite. Behold then the grienous calamities that haue been in former times, both when the heathen Emperours persecuted and murdered the Christians, and also in the time that Antichrist had set vp idolatrie: here is hell following, both the graue, and the infernall torments. The red horse then with bloudie warres, the blacke horse with famine, the pale horse with the pestilence, haue power giuen them ouer the fourth part of men. For so it is sayd, that power was giuen them (as I take it rather then to say power was giuen him) ouer the fourth part of men, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and with the beasts of the earth. Thus wee see the grienous plagues that haue been: and these being sent of God, there is no way to withstand them, but onely with true and vnfeined repentance, not despising the blessed Gospell of peace, but obeying it from the heart. For the despising and hating of it, draweth all these horrible plagues vpon the world. When ye see them or heare of them, remember the sinnes daily committed, and tremble. The Lord of heauen giue vs grace to be warned.

K 3

The



The foureteenth Sermon.

- 9 And when he had opened the fift feale, I saw vnder the altar, the soules of them that were killed for the word of God, and for the testimonie which they maintained.
- 10 And they cried with a loude voyce, saying, how long Lord, which art holie and true, doest not thou iudge and auenge our bloud on them that dwell on the earth?
- 11 And long white robes were giuen to euery one, and it was sayd vnto them, that they should rest for a litle season, untill their fellow seruants and their bretheren, that should be killed euen as they were, were fulfilled.
- 12 And I beheld when hee had opened the sixt seale, and loe, there was a greuous earthquake, and the Sunne was as blacke as a sackcloth of haire, and the Moone was like blond.
- 13 And the starres of heauen fell vnto the earth, as a fig tree casteth her greene figges, when it is shaken of a mightie winde.
- 14 And heauen departed away as a scrole when it is rolled, and euery mountaine and Ile were moved out of their places.
- 15 And the Kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chiefe captaynes, and the mightie men, and euery bondman, and euery freeman, hid themselves in denues, and among the rockes of the mountaines.
- 16 And sayd to the mountaines and rockes, fall on vs, and hide vs, from the presence of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lambe.
- 17 For the great day of his wrath is come, and who can stand?



IN the opening of the former seales, wee haue seene figured out, first the going forth of the Gospell, and then the horrible plagues sent vpon the wicked world for despising the same. In the opening of the fift seale is set forth the state of the soules, of those which had been killed for the Gospell. It was very needfull that this should be, because they seemed to the world of all other to be the most wretched, and miserable. While they liued in the world, they were subiect to the common calamities with other men, and besides this they were put to death most cruelly: yea moreouer, they were put to death as men not worthe to liue vpon the earth,

earth. For looke whatsoeuer calamities came, as of the pestilence, of the famine, and of such like, the cause was layd vpon them. The Gods (for so the heathen did speake) they sayd were angrie, and did punish because of that new learning. If any thing fell out beside ordinarie course, by and by, they cryed to the lyon with the Christian (as ancient writers which liued in those times doe testifie). Hereat they ranne vpon them and murdered them on heapes, both men and women, with all the most grieuous tortures they could deuise. How many thousands did they after this manner slay in the first ten persecutions? and they euen these Christians, were reproched, and accursed among men, as the most vile and detestable things that euer were vpon the earth. And the Lord God seemed to haue no care of them. This might trouble weake mindes, to thinke what is become of them. They haue been murdered on heapes in all places, their bodies haue been euen trode downe as the mire. This, as I saide, might much trouble the mindes of the weake, and therefore here is shewed vnto Iohn in vision, that howsoeuer the world did accurse and condemne them, and tread them downe as mire in the streete, yet God had them in price and estimation, and had placed them in ioy and blisse with their redeemer.

But let vs come to the words as they lie in the text. *When he had opened the fift seale, I saw vnder the altar, the soules of them which were killed for the word of God, and for the testimonie which they maintained.* At such time as Iohn receiued this reuelation, there had been many slaine for the Christian profession: but thinges to come are also shewed vnto him in vision, and so no doubt the soules not onely of those which were then already slaine, are in vision resembled, but also of many other which were after ward put to death vnder the persecuting Romane Emperors: That they be vnder the altar, it representeth indeede that they be with Christ in heauen, and that they be in ioyfull rest vnder his custodie and protection: for Christ is both the priest, the altar, and the sacrifice. It is the same thing in effect with that which is in Luk. 16. touching the soules of the righteous in Abrahams bosome. And with that which our Sauour sayd to the theefe, Luk. 23. *This day shalt thou be with mee in paradise.* The thing I say is all one, but that here is another phrase of speech, which is applied fitly to the martyrs. For they were offered vp to God after a sort as slaine sacrifices, euen vpon that heauenly altar, when they were cruelly murdered for the Gospell, and therefore he saw their soules now vnder the altar. They were vnder that altar vpon which they were sacrificed to God. The papists of Rhemes doe gather a great matter from hence to maintaine their idolatrous laying vp the reliques and bodies of martyrs vnder or neere their altars. Christ (say they) as man no doubt is this altar, vnder which the soules of all martyrs liue in heauen, expecting their bodies, as Christ their head hath his bodie already. And for correspondence to their place or state in heauen, the Church layeth commonly their bodies also, or reliques neere, or vnder the altars, where our Sauours bodie is offered in the holy Masse: and hath a speciall prouiso that no altars bee erected or consecrated without some part of a Saints bodie or reliques. Thus write our Iesuites. But we reade of no such thing either commanded or done by the Apostles, or by any in the Primitiue Church. Wee reade that Steuen was a martyr, and that

religious men tooke him vp and carried him, no doubt to be buried: but we reade not that they buried him vnder an altar. We reade not in all the new Testament of any altar but this one in heauen, nor of any sacrificing the body of Christ but once, when he offered himselfe vpon the crosse. So that in very deepe their altars & their sacrifices of the Masse, are euen so many sacrilegious blasphemies against the only spirituall altar Christ, and the sacrifice which he offered. For Christ offered himselfe to God by his eternall spirite, that is, by his Godhead, and from thence hath his blood the power to purge sinne, Hebr. 9. Let the Papiists proue that any man, yea any Angell is worlthie, to offer Christ in sacrifice to his father, Iesus Christ yesterday, and to day, and the same for euer, Hebr. 13. Were not then the fathers vnder the law incorporate into him as we are? How els could the whole Church be his bodie, and he the head? Could they be incorporate, and not eate his flesh & drinke his blood, and so mystically and by a spirituall vniion bee made flesh of his flesh, and bones of his bones? S. Paul sayth (speaking of those fathers) that they did all eate the same spirituall meate, and drinke the same spirituall drinke, 1. Cor. 10. Did they eate Christ but in a figure, & we in truth, as our Papiists would beare vs in hand? If they did eate him but in a figure, they were either graffed into him but in a figure, and saued but in a figure: or els Christs mysticall bodie being but one, yet not all saued after one manner. Wee cannot bee saued vntill we eate his flesh, and drinke his blood, Ioh. 6. No more could Abraham, Moses, Dauid, nor all the Prophets. Christ is the bread of life to the whole world: if we eate this bread one way, and Abraham and the Prophets another, or they but in figure, that is, in trueth not at all, then our faith and their faith is not all one, they are saued one way and wee another. What wicked absurdities will follow hereof we may easily see: and therefore it is most euident, that albeit we haue Christ more fully reuealed vnto vs, being come and hauing finished all things which were promised to them, and which were vnder figures shadowed forth vnto them, yet as we eate his flesh and drinke his blood, so did they. They did eate his very flesh, and drinke his very blood spiritually, and so doe we, they eat it not with their teeth, no more doe we. His bodie once slaine vpon the crosse was available to saue them, so is it to saue vs. What correspondence can there bee then betweene the soules of the martyrs vnder the heauenly altar, and the laying of dead bones and reliques neere to these blasphemous popish altars? Christs bodie doth not come vpon those altars, and therefore if they haue in the poperie any bodies bones or reliques of such as were true martyrs in deepe, the laying of them vp so, is not as their soules are neere to him in heauen, so their bodies are neere to his bodie in earth: but they are vniuently and wickedly abused vnto most vile idolatrie, and filthie lucre: euen as the Israelites would haue worshipped the bodie of Moses, if they could haue come by it, and therefore the Lord buried him they knew not where, about which the diuell stroue, as S. Iude sheweth. While he was aliue they often rebelled against him, and were readie to stone him, but being dead, they would haue worshipped him. They which murdered Christ, built the sepulchers of the Prophets in their honour, Matth. 23. Euen so the idolatrous papiists, murder the faithfull that come into their hands, and wor-

ship

ship the martyrs which were slaine by their fathers in old time. Then next he sayth, that these soules of the martyrs, *cried with a loude voyce, saying, how long O Lord, which art holie and true, dost thou not auenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?* This is a vehement crying for vengeance vpon those that had shed their blood, yea euen for full vengeance. And moreover they cry for it speedily, and seeme to bee impatient of the delay. Here bee two things that may seeme very hard. The one, that the holie martyrs before they died, (as we see in Steuen, Act. 7.) prayed for their persecutors, that God would not lay that sinne to their charge: and after their death cleane contrarie they cry onely for speedie vengeance. The other, that they be in such discontentment and disturbance, which agreeth not with ioy and peace, or such happie estate as they are sayd to rest in, that be in heauen. I will answer to these. For the first it is most vndoubted, that the blessed martyrs in heauen are not led with any hatred or priuate desire of reuenge, in respect of any wrong or crueltie shewed to them: but with a loue and burning zeale of the kingdome and glorie of Christ, and whatsoeuer desire they haue it is wholly to that end. Wherefore they are here vnder a figure brought in crying for vengeance, rather to expresse what iudgement of God tarieth for the cruell persecutors, then to shew what minde they beare towards them. For it is indeede their cause that crieth for vengeance, and as Abels blood, so their blood crieth aloud in the eares of the Lord of hosts for reuenge. And here their crying is to shew that God hath not forgotten them: but that indeede their cruell persecutors shall come to their account. For these things shewed in vision and figure, are applied to our capacitie. As the Iudge can neuer forget where the crye is still in his eares, so the Lorde hath not forgotten (though he delay for a time) the blood of his seruants that hath been shed. Thus we may consider, and not take it that they are carried with desire of reuenge. Touching the other poynt then, the martyrs haue no disturbance, no impatience, nor vnquietnes to hinder their peace and ioy in which they rest, the lowd crie is not to shew any discontentment or disquietnes in them. The Saints in heauen (as it must needes bee granted) haue not that full glorie which they shall haue when the sonnes of God shall be reuealed, and therefore desire the last iudgement, when they shall receiue their bodies: and no doubt their desire is earnest. S. Peter speaketh of the Angels how they couet to behold the things which shall bee accomplished at that day, 2. Pet. 1. And yet the Angels are not hindred in their present ioy by that vehement desire: for they rest in the will of God: and so do the holy martyrs which are here spoken of.

The next words doe shew that they be in honour, in glorie, and in peace, when he sayth *long white robes were given to euery one of them.* For these robes are robes of dignitie and blisse. I neede not to stay in the exposition of them. And lastly, it is shewed, that the full redemption is for a little season deferred, and they must rest contented, because there are moe of their brethren to be slaine, as they were. Surely the beast which maketh warre against the Saints, hath murdered many in sundrie kingdomes, yea exceeding heapes now of late yeares in France, so that the number is filled vp a pace: whereby wee are admonished to lift vp our heads, and

to looke for that blessed day. God hath set the number, and the persons whom he will call vnto martyrdome, and the times wherein they shall bee called: happie, yea thrise happie and blessed are they that bee of this number. Let vs not bee so much afayd to haue our bloud shed for the testimonie of Christ. It is sharpe vnto the flesh for a little time: but ye see in what account they be with God, that were constant euen vnto death in the profession of his name. If wee trust in our owne strength we shall fall: but if we feele our weakenes and trust in God, he will make vs able to stand.

The opening of the sixt seale followeth next, in which there be figured out most fearfull and horrible tokens of Gods displeasure vpon the wicked world, and the horror of conscience wherewith all sorts of worldly men are stricken and terrified, at the beholding of them. There were grieuous things at the opening of the second, third, and fourth seales: but now after the crie of the martyrs for vengeance, though the full vengeance bee not executed, yet the Lord doth declare his wrath further euen in a wonderfull manner, and as it were with the astonishment of all creatures. So horrible a thing before God is the sauage crueltie in sheading the bloud of true Christians, and so much is he moued at the crie of their bloud: for the terrible things which now follow are vpon their crie for vengeance. Let vs see the things. First there was a great earthquake. Then the Sunne is darkened, and becommeth as blacke as an haire-cloth. The Moone is turned into bloud. The stars fall, euen as a figge tree casteth her greene figges when it is shaken of a mightie winde. Heauen departeth away as a scrole that is rolled, and euery mountaine and Ile are remoued out of their places. This is it which Saint Peter, Act. 2. did alleage out of the Prophet Iecl: It shall be in the last dayes sayth God, I will powre out of my spirit vpon all flesh, and your sonnes and your daughters shal prophetic, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dreame dreames, &c. And I will giue signes in heauen aboue, and tokens in earth beneath, bloud, and fire, and the vapour of smoke: the Sunne shall be turned into darknes, and the Moone into bloud, before that great and notable day of the Lord come. These signes in heauen aboue, and tokens in earth beneath, are signes and tokens of Gods heauie displeasure. For as his kindnes exceedeth in the Gospell in powring forth the greatest gifts and graces of his spirit: so is his indignation the more increased that such mercies are not only despised & hated, but that also al crueltie is shewed vnto those that embrace them. We reade of mightie shakings and earthquakes in old time, by which many cities were overthrowne. We reade of such tumults, commotions, and seditions among the nations, as if al were on fire, and turned into bloud. Moreover, we reade of such conuision, such sects and heresies, that worldly men haue as sensibly perceiued the wrath and displeasure of God, as if the Sunne it selfe were darkened, the Moone turned into bloud, and the starres should fall, yea as if there were such an horrible ecoussion, as that the heauens should depart, and the mountaines and Iles be remoued out of their places. We doe not reade that the Sunne, the Moone, or the starres indeed, or the heauens, the mountaines or Iles were thus: but that they should be. We see the histories and records of ancient writers, and see the state

of the world for twelue, or thirteene, or fourtee hundred yeares past, in the times, and immediatly after the times of those cruell bloudie slaughters of Christs martyrs: must needs confesse that God did wonderfully, yea so wonderfully declare his wrath from heauen, as if these things spoken of the Sunne, the Moone and the starres, had been visibly represented to the eye. Those ancient times were wonderfull grieuous, and lamentable to behold. And if we come downward vnto later times, in which the poperie began to grow, and was set vp (how soeuer the papists speake of a golden world) wee shall reade of such terrible signes, and tokens of Gods anger, as the like haue neuer been heard of. For as heresies, superstition, idolatry, and mens inuentions increased and bare sway, to the defacing of the Gospell, and of the pure worship of God: and as hatred and enmitie increased agaynst Gods true seruants, to the persecuting and rooting of them out: so God increased his plagues and heauie iudgements vpon the world. Great commotions, great bloudsheds, great pestilences, great famines, yea great miseries of all sorts did euer anon ouerspred. I doe not mislike, in these tokens and signes of Gods wrath in the earthquakes, darkening of the Sunne, turning the Moone into bloud, and the starres falling from heauen; the heauens departing away, the mountaines and Iles remouing, that we also take a mysticall exposition. As by the earthquakes (as our Sauour, Matth. 24. foresheued there should bee famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in all places) wee may take it were shewed the shakings of the people, the chaunges and alterations of kingdomes, states and religions. For the alterations were marueilous in many kingdomes. There were tumults, and commotions, and hideous broyles in all countries. There haue been slaughters, and turning all into bloud, when tyrants haue persecuted. The ministers of the Gospell haue fallen and dropped downe from heauen, euen from their heauenly light, and other such grieuous things.

Now followeth the effect of these signes in the hearts of the prophane worldly men of all degrees. All are terrified, and that grieuously at the beholding of these things. For he sayth the kings of the earth, the great men, and the rich men, euery bond man, and euery free man, hid themselves in dennes, and among the rockes in the moutaines. If a companie of wicked subiects were committing some wicked facts to the dishonour and dammage of the king, and the king commeth forth to looke vpon them, and testifieth his anger, they scatter and runne to hide themselves: so the Lord shewing himselfe from heauen, with fearefull signes of his displeasure at the crie of his martyrs and for the dishonour offered to his name: the wicked enemies are not able to abide his looke, but scatter every way, and hide themselves. They despised him before, when he seemed to be absent and to keepe silence. They made a mocke of his Gospell, and of his sonne. They trode downe his poore seruants. Now when hee sheweth by terrible signes, that hee beholdeth them and is angrie, they know not which way to turne them. Death is a fearefull thing, but not so fearefull as his presence: and therefore they seeke some comfort if it might be that way, wishing that the mountaines and rockes might fall vpon them.

them, and hide them from his presence. For they confesse by those signes, that the day of his wrath is come, and that none can abide it. It may bee sayd, when was this fulfilled? whē do we reade that there was such a scare among men? We must vnderstand, that these things shewed in vision, were not so fulfilled to the bodily eye, but the holy Ghost vnder these figures, doth shew into what terror of conscience all the wicked enemies haue been cast into, at the beholding the signes and tokens of Gods displeasure, and being priuie and remembring all the iniuries, and contempt shewed against the Lord Iesus and his Church. They doe not repent: for an vngodly man comming to faith and repentance, shunneth not the presence of God, though he haue grievously sinned: but these desire they may not come into the sight of God and of the Lambe. They delighted themselues in their vngodly wayes, and now they perceiue that God is offended, for they gather it by his grievous plagues and fearfull signes, they see they must come to iudgement, and that doth torment and trouble them. How great thinke ye were the troubles and tokens of wrath, when the very tyrants are made to feeble and confesse, and that with such inward trouble and feare, that Christ is displeased for the iniuries which they haue done vnto him? They that reade ancient histories shall finde, that when the hand of God hath been vpon them, some of the most cruell haue been euen forced to vtter, that it was for tormenting the poore Christians. And looke vpon men at this day, and marke the most wicked and desperate despisers and blasphemers of the trueth, and if there fall out any fearfull signe, that God seemeth to come neere in displeasure, ye shall see them quake and perplexed for the time, in such sort that they cannot tell where to become. Their mindes doe as it were seeke darke denes to hide themselues in. Why is a Lambe then so terrible? He is a Lambe indeede euery way to his chosen, but most terrible to all those which oppresse his chosen. They be deere vnto him, yea so deere, that his wrath is kindled against all that hate them. We may see by this place, that wicked and prophane mockers, and despisers of the Gospell, though they carrie smooth faces, are made oftentimes to feeble that which they would willingly be rid of. And let vs learne to kisse the sonne (as the Prophet willeth, Psal. 2.) least he be angrie. Let vs imbrace with all gladnesse his trueth: let vs obey him, and loue his people: and then what troubles and commotions, and fearfull tokens soeuer fall out, we shall haue inward peace and comfort. Yea when death commeth we shall haue ioy, and be nothing terrified at the iudgement seate, nor feare the Iudge: but we shall willingly endure to come into his presence. O what a treasure is this, and now in our life time to be sought for. The Lord giue vs wisdom for to doe it, Amen.

The



The fifteenth Sermon.

CAP. 7.

- 1 And after that I saw foure Angels stand on the foure corners of the earth, holding the foure windes of the earth, that the windes should not blow on the earth, neither on the sea, neither on any tree.
- 2 And I saw another Angell come up from the East, which had the seale of the liuing God, and he cried with a lowd voyce to the foure Angels, to whom power was giuen to hurt the earth, and the sea, saying:
- 3 Hurt ye not the earth, neither the sea, neither the trees, till we haue sealed the seruants of God in their foreheads.
- 4 And I heard the number of them that were sealed, and there were sealed an hundred and foure and fourtie thousand of all the tribes of Israel.
- 5 Of the tribe of Iuda were sealed twelue thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelue thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelue thousand.
- 6 Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelue thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthali were sealed twelue thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelue thousand.
- 7 Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelue thousand. Of the tribe of Leui were sealed twelue thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelue thousand. Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelue thousand.
- 8 Of the tribe of Ioseph were sealed twelue thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelue thousand.
- 9 After these things I beheld, and loe, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lambe, clothed with long white robes, and palmes in their hands.



IN the times of the opening the former seales, vnder the persecuting Emperours, there were thousands, yea thousand thousands cruelly murdered for the Gospell, as it was noted before in the sixt chapter. They were iudged of the heathen people, to bee so vile and so wicked, that looke whatsoeuer strange plagues fell out in the world, they were sayd to be the cause of the same, and so they were put to death with execration, as things most detestable. Moreover, God seemed to haue small care of them, when he suffered them to be tormented, and killed: wherefore least this might trouble

the mindes of the godly, or least they should want any encouragement or heartning to stand boldly in the truth, in the opening of the fift scale, the soules of those so murdered, are shewed to Iohn in vision to bee in blessed estate, and moreover there is reuealed, that horrible vengeance doth remaine for those which had so cruelly shed their blood. And further, as we haue seene, after the cry of those martyrs for reuenge of their blood, in the opening of the sixt scale, the Lord God is so highly displeased, and his anger so iustly kindled for this vile contumely shewed against his sonne, and against his faithfull members, that he manifestly sheweth the signes and tokens of his wrath in the heauens and in the earth, with such shakings, such darknes, such horror and confusions, that all the prophane aduersaries are marvellously terrified. Most horrible was the state of the worlde at that time. Now it might bee sayd, these soules of the martyrs are safe, which are the Church triumphant, they be arriued vpon the haues of securitie, the waues and tempests cannot come nigh them: but now what shall become of the Church militant, the Church in earth, being in the confused gulf, and tossed in the darknes, in the time of the commotions and fearful signes here spoken of? Yea when heauen and earth seeme to be mingled together with such confused darknes, and when all things come to passe which are shewed at the opening of the sixt scale, and many more at the opening of the seuenth, which lasteth to the end of the world; it may be sayd what shall become of them? This doubt is answered, that the Lord Iesus doth so provide for, and so preserue his chosen in the midst of all these horrible things, that not so much as one of them doth miscarrie. To declare so much to the singular consolation of all the faithfull, here is set downe in this chapter, which is placed betweene the opening of the sixt scale and the seuenth, how Iohn in vision saw these faithfull in earth sealed, and set in safetie, euen a great and an insinur number, hee heard the praise which they giue to God, and had shewed vnto him their happie estate with Christ. So then the Church in earth, though in great assaults, euen in the time of Antichrist, is as safe, as the martyrs in heauen. And this same did the Prophet Ioele also in a word expresse, as S Peter doth also alleage it, Act. 2. For hauing told that there shuld be signes in heauen aboue, and tokens in earth beneath, blood, and fire, and the vapour of smoke, and that the Sunne should be turned into darknes, and the Moone into blood, &c. he addeth, It shal come to passe, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saued. Let the heauens and the earth bee mingled, let darknes, horror and confusion be neuer so great, blessed be the high prouidence, there shall not one of Gods seruants perish.

But let vs come to the words as they lie. That hee seeth foure Angels standing vpon the foure corners of the earth, &c. It may be demaunded, whether they were good or euill Angels: for there be good Angels, and there be euill Angels. And we may finde in the holy Scriptures, that God hath executed his iudgements or plagues vpon wicked men, as well by his heauenly ministers and holy Angels, as by infernall spirits the malignant wicked diuels. I take it out of doubt that these were vncleane spirits, euen diuels of hell, these foure Angels here spoken of: because the plagues wherewith they are to hurt, are chiefly spirituall, as we shall see, and such as

the

the diuels doe execute. That they stand vpon the foure corners of the earth, it sheweth that they haue power giuen the to plague vniuersally ouer the whole world, and not in some one countrie, or in some few places. For vnder East, West, North, and South, the foure corners, or the foure quarters, the whole world is included. That they hold the foure winds, the question is whether they hold them backe from doing harme, vntill their power be giuen to loose the, or whether they haue power to hurt by holding them backe. Certaine it is that the winds sometime when they blow ouer lowd, do much hurt both by sea and by land. For they drowne shippes, and ouerthrow houses, and trees: but yet the windes cannot be spared, they bee so holesome, and good for all things that lue and grow. Wherefore I take it out of doubt, that these foure Angels holding the foure windes that they should not blow vpon the earth, vpon the sea, nor vpon any tree, doe it to hurt, according to the power which was giuen vnto them. God is angrie and giueth them power, and they are readie. Then let vs see what is represented by holding the windes from blowing. No doubt here is a spirituall plague represented, because here is such a speciall prouiso and care shewed for the Church, for her safe keeping from spirituall daungers. The seruants of God haue their part in outward calamities, but that sealing of them which is here spoken of, setteth them safe from spirituall infection, so farre as to bee ouerthrowne thereby. The blowing of the windes, doe fitly represent the preaching of the Gospell, and that heauenly inspiration and breathing of the holie Ghost which goeth with it. Then on the contrarie the holding of the windes, is the stopping of the course of the Gospell, and so the keeping backe of that heauenly grace. And lest any should take this to be but mans coniecture, vnderstand that the Scripture it selfe vserh this similitude, as we may reade in the 4. chapter of the song of Salomon, where the Church speaketh thus: Arise O North wind, and come O South winde, blow vpon my garden, and the spices thereof shall flow, &c. What can be meant by these winds which she wisheith to blow vpon her garden, but the heauenly breathings of Gods holy spirit and word? Will any deny this? Then the holding of the foure windes representeth the great and generall plague of all plagues, euen the stopping of this holesome breath through the world. That which God sayd, I will powre out of my spirit vpon all flesh, is the highest blessing vnder heauen: for the spirit giueth life. But the world is euer so vnthankfull, and doth set so light by heauenly blessings, doth so hate the truth, and persecute those which loue it, that God is highly offended, & giueth power to the diuels to slay the Gospell, and so to bring in darknes, and famine, and destruction vpon all nations. Lay all the things then together which I haue noted, that the power giuen to these Angels to hurt the earth is spirituall, because here is such speciall prouision to set the Church and al her children in safetie sealed with the scale of God: and because the breathing of the windes in the Scripture doth resemble that heauenly inspiration of Gods spirit, which with the preaching of the liuely word bloweth vpon the Church: and moreover that it is held backe from all the foure corners of the earth: and ye see that there should come a time when the Gospell should as it were cease, and not bee published freely and openly in any countrie of the world. Surely this

hath

hath been fulfilled many yeares together in the time of the tyrannie of the great Antichrist the Pope of Rome, which threw downe Gods worship, and set vp his owne lawes, euen the worship of diuels. O gricuous times. O wretched dayes: when the wholesome breath of life is taken away, and men are choked. But here may be demaunded, what becommeth of the Church now? Doth not S. Paul say that God saue the beleeuers by foolish preaching? 1. Cor. 1. Are men saued now without the heauenly breathing of the holy Ghost, and of the glorious Gospell? Can there be any faith without these? Indeepe the vision shewed in this chapter, is to answer and to satisfie that doubt. And therefore that we may know that Christ would, and did prouide for his chosen some breath, euen when it was generally stayed, and did not blow: yea that after a miraculous sort euen in the middest of all darknes, when the whole ayre was corrupted, when men did sucke in no breath but of filthie poysoned superstition, idolatrie, and stinking rotten dregges of mens inuentions, he did minister light, and quickening breath, and wholesome foode vnto them, and kept them from the generall infection. The next words doe shewe how this was performed. *And I saw (sayth S. Iohn) another Angell come vp from the East, hauing the seale of the liuing God, and he cried with a lowd voyce to the foure Angels, to whom power was giuen to hurt the earth, and the sea, saying: Hurt ye not the earth, neither the sea, neither the trees, untill we haue sealed the seruants of God in their foreheads.* This Angel comming vp from the East, is the blessed Lord Iesus himselfe, as ye shall see it plaine by this, that he hath the seale of the liuing God to set vpon all the elect: for none haue that seale to set the print of it vpon men, but Christ, as it will better appeare when wee come to see what this seale of the liuing God is. He commeth vp from the East, for he is the sonne of righteousness that ariseth and shineth vpon his Church, and expelleth all spirituall darknes from her, euen when all the whole rout of infernall spirits are let loose in the world to couer the earth with the darknes of hell. *He hath the seale of the liuing God.* What is this seale then? S. Paul doth shew what it is, who is a sufficient witnes, when he sayth, After ye beleueed, ye were sealed with the holie spirit of promise, Ephes. 1. Then the spirit of God, euen the spirit of adoption, is the seale of God, wherewith all the elect are sealed, and set in safetie in the middest of Antichrists tyrannie. For whosoeuer hath the print of this seale vpon him, he is out of danger. To this agreeth S. Iohn in his first Epistle chap. 2. speaking of the comming of Antichrist, for he setteth the beleeuers in safetie by this, as he sayth, Ye haue receiued an annoynting from that holie one, and know all things. Ye shall not neede to feare Antichrist, he shal not be able to seduce ye, because ye are taught by the holie Ghost. The Papists would make vs beleue, that seeing there shal be false Prophets, & deceiuers, & strong delusion of error, & heresies, in the world, the only safetie of the people is to cleaue to Christs Vicar (for so they call the Pope) hee can neuer erre: for so also they speake of the Pope. But this is the diuels subtletie, to leade men to seeke their safetie vnder his wings, which is the destruction of all. This is according to the olde prouerbe, to make the foxe the goosheerd. Christ neuer speaketh of such a safetie, he neuer sayth cleaue to him that shall be Bishop

of Rome but sealeth vp his chosen with the seale of the liuing God, he giueth them that annoynting which teacheth them all things. And hereby (as I sayd before) it is manifest that this Angell is the Lord Iesus: for who can seale vp with the spirit of adoption but he? who can giue the holie Ghost but he? Is it not peculiar to him, which Iohn the Baptist sayd of him, *He shall baptize ye with the holy Ghost and with fire?* This sealing vp of the seruants of God in their foreheads, say the Papists of Rhemes, is an allusion to the signe of the crosse, which the faithfull beare in their foreheads, to shew they be not ashamed of Christ. I answer, that this is but frivolous, as any man may see, yea a childe may see, if hee consider that the seale here spoken of is the proper signe of Gods elect, by which they are seuered and discerned from all the reprobate, and by which they stand safe from all spirituall perils. No reprobate is signed with this seale, but many a reprobate is signed with the signe of the crosse. And then seeing the signe of the crosse is common to hypocrites, how can that bee an allusion to it, which seuereth the true seruants of God from all other? But these papists would blind the simple people with any shew. Surely they care not what grossenes other men doe espie in them, so the superstitious and idolatrous sort may bee kept blind, and haue them still in admiration.

This mightie Angell crieth with a lowd voyce to the foure Angels, to whom power was giuen to hurt the earth, and the sea, saying: hurt not the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees, untill we haue sealed the seruants of God in their foreheads. The Lord Iesus hath al power in heauen and in earth giuen vnto him. He hath the keyes of death and of hell. He commandeth with authoritie the very diuels. And wher power is giuen them for to hurt (as they haue no power, but as it is giuen them) it is restrained and limited, and so farre, that they cannot plucke out of Christs hand, nor hurt so much as one of his chosen. He sealeth them vp, and setteth them safe. If it were possible (as he saith, Matth. 24.) the elect should be deceiued: but blessed be his holy name, which hath made it impossible. And further we are here to note, that these Angels cannot hurt the earth, and the sea, that is, not euen the worldlings, and reprobate, untill Gods seruants be set free out of danger. Great is the kindnes of our Lord towards his redeemed. Lot made petition and sute to the Angels that he might haue a citie to flie vnto, and the same being graunted, they will him to make haste thither, saying, that they could doe nothing untill he came thither. We reade also, that when the Lord would destroy Ierusalem for all the wicked abominations therein committed, he shewed to the Prophet in a vision, the destroyers comming forth with their weapons to destroy: also a man girded in a linnen garment which went through as he was willed, and marked all those in their forehead which mourned and cried out for the abominations there committed: and the destroyers were to follow him, & not to touch any that was marked. Ezech. 9. They could not destroy the wicked, untill the godly were marked and set free. Let vs then bee well assured, that in the middest of all Sathans deceits, and in the very prime of Antichrists tyrannie, and of all mischiefes and confusions, those shall all stand safe which call vpon the name of the Lord: euen all that call vpon him, as

the Prophet sayth, in truth: for they be all sealed in their foreheads with the seale of the liuing God. Here is then the wisdom, the power, and prouidence of God highly set forth and glorified, that draweth out euery one of his seruants out of this swelling and raging gulf, so full of darknes and stormes, so that no one of them doth miscarrie. The diuels and the tyrants doe euen as it were throw wilde fire, seeking to consume, to ouerwhelme and to drowne them, but all in vaine, through the goodnes of God. But why is it sayd that the seruants of God are sealed in their foreheads? If the holy spirit of promise, euen the spirit of adoption, bee the seale, wherewith they bee sealed, he is set to in the heart, and not vpon the forehead. To answer this, we must here consider that in spirituall things the holie scriptures doe speake as of corporall, applying all to our capacitie. The spirit, the soule, or the heart of man, hath no forehead, as wee see in the head of the bodie, but yet is sayd to receiue the marke or print of this seale in the forehead, because it doth openly appeare. And further we must note, that it appeareth not onely to God and his Angels, but also vnto men. If ye will demanda, how doth this seale appeare to men? I answer, that a man cannot carrie fire in his bosome; and no heare appeare. In like manner, a man cannot be sealed with the holie Ghost, and carrie it so close in his heart, but that it will appeare in the outward conuersation and behauiour and profession. The good workes, euen the fruites of the spirit will shew themselves, with the witnessing of the truth. Such as walke in euill workes, or make no profession of the holie Gospell, say what they will, there can bee no print of this seale seene in their foreheads. If we be sealed, let vs declare our loue and zeale to the Gospell, and our good dedes, and workes of mercie to our brethren that be in distresse.

Now followeth the number of the seruants of God which are sealed. *I heard the number of them that were sealed, and there were sealed an hundred, and foure and fourtie thousand, of all the tribes of Israel.* The Church consisteth of Iewes and Gentiles: the Iewes had the prerogative to be before the Gentiles, and therefore he beginneth first with them. The Gospell is the power of God to saluation, to euery one that beleueth, to the Iew first, and then to the Grecian, Rom. 1. vers. 16. They are called the naturall branches, Rom. 11. And in the same chapter S. Paul disputeth, and sheweth that God hath his remnant stil among them. Some of them be now and then in one countrie or other converted to Christ: but this great number vnder the opening of the sixt and seuenth seale, doe import a more general calling of the nation of the Iewes (if they may rightly be called a nation, being so scattered among the nations) which thing also Saint Paul seemeth to prophetic of, Rom. 11. The number of Gods elect among them now in these latter dayes, is set down to be an hundred and foure and fourtie thousand. Not that we are to take it so as that there are iust so many, neither more nor lesse: but this number doth arise of twelue times twelue: in that he sayth of euery tribe twelue thousand. Which we are not also so to vnderstand, as that there shuld be of euery tribe an equal number, not more, nor lesse of one then of another: but this number of twelue is vsed as the perfect and full number, in as much as the Church of the Iewes was founded

vpon

vpon twelue Patriarkes, the twelue sonnes of Iacob. Vnto which our Sauour had respect, when for to gather the disperfed and lost sheepe of the house of Israel, he chose twelue Apostles. Iohn heard the tribes seuerally reckoned vp, and of euery one sealed twelue thousand. Then God hath not (as S. Paul sayth) cast off his people which he had chosen. He hath a remnant among them through the election of grace, which he respecteth, and sheweth by this particular rehearfall. But how is it that here are twelue tribes, and yet some left out? In Moses we reade that Iacob had but twelue sonnes, and yet there are twelue tribes to whom the lande of Canaan is diuided, besides the tribe of Leui, which had no seuerall inheritance of a tribe allotted. Thus it came to passe, the eldest was to haue the prerogative of the first borne, both touching the principallitie for Christ the king to come of him, and also to haue a double portion of the land. Reuben was the eldest, but he committed incest with one of his fathers wiues, and so was cast downe from this dignitie, Gen. 49. vers. 3. 4. Simeon was the next, and then Leui, they are both deprived of it for their cruell fact in killing the Sichamites, because their sister Dina was deflowered. Iehuda was the fourth, he preuailed, and obtained the principallitie, and so Iacob setteth him forth in the same chapter, Thy brethren shall praise thee, thy hand shall be in the necke of thine enemies, thy fathers sonnes shall bow to thee. It is manifest, as it is sayd in the Epistle to the Hebrues, that our Lord sprong of Iuda. But Iuda did not obtaine the whole birthright, but part of it befell vnto Ioseph, as namely a double portion in the diuision of the land, and his two sonnes Manasse and Ephraim become two tribes. This is set forth 1. Chron. 5. vers. 1. 2. Also ye may reade how Iacob himselfe doth appoint it so, Gen. 48. vers. 5. Thy two sonnes (sayth hee to Ioseph) which were borne vnto thee in the land of Egypt, before I came to thee into Egypt, are mine: Ephraim and Manasse, are mine, as Reuben, & Simeon. So then Ioseph being two tribes, there are 12. besides the tribe of Leui which did not inherit as the rest, but was scattered in Israel. Here now in sealing twelue thousand of euery tribe, the one sonne of Ioseph is named, and Ioseph himselfe for the other. And againe, because the priesthood of Leui ceaseth, and all are made priests, and the Leuites inherit as the rest do, in the heauely land of promise, the tribe of Leui is here brought in, and the number of twelue being precisely to be kept, the tribe of Dan is omitted. This tribe fell to idolatrie, as ye may reade, Iudg. 18. and continued therein vntill the captiuitie, and are not numbred among the tribes, 1. Chron. chap. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. where all the other tribes are rehearsed. Some of the Papists doe gather a mysterie out of this, that the tribe of Dan is here omitted, and haue heretofore stood much vpon it: because some of the ancient fathers did take it that Antichrist should come of the tribe of Dan; hereby sundrie fables haue sprung touching Antichrist. This hath been the cunning of the diuell, to the end that the great Antichrist might not be knowne, to draw mens minds to waite for one that shall come of the Iewes. They may waite long enough: for when the Iewes shall receiue the Messias which they dreame of to come, then shall the papists also see that Antichrist which they imagine. But the truth is, the learnedest papists, and euen the papists of Rhemes, doe see the vanitie of this collec-

L 2

tion,

tion, that Antichrist should come of the tribe of Dan, and doe omit it: and then what should we stand to confute it?

Having done with the number of those which were sealed of the Iewes, hee commeth then to the Gentiles. Indeed the Church of the Iewes had the priuiledge to be before them: but herein the Church of the Gentiles goeth beyond her, that the multitude of her children is innumerable. God indeede can number them, but no man is able to number them. For thus S. Iohn sayth, *After these things I beheld, and loe a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lambe, clothed with long white robes, and palmes in their hands.* Here wee may learne first, that we are not to measure Gods Church after our own senses, whē idolatrie, superstition, open wickednes, bloudie persecutions, and slaughters, and darknes, do ouerspread all. Elias the Prophet saw such things ouerspread in Israel, and complained that he was left alone. But he was deceiued, for the Lord made him answer, I haue reserved to my selfe 7000. in Israel, which haue not bowed the knee to Baal. If so great a Prophet were so much deceiued in so small a corner: how shal not other which are farre inferiour to him, bee deceiued among the multitude of the nations? beholding the manifold corruptions in manners which euery where ouerspread in the Churches: but chiefly looking backe into the idolatrous, darke and bloudie kingdome of Antichrist, a Donatist will iudge few or none to remaine. But to correct this boldnes, here is shewed that euen in the most miserable times, the Lord did preferue his Church, had his elect in the confused heape, and that in a maruailous great number. Then also here is comfort to support weak mindes in such times of distresse, and haucke. But when our Sauour sayth, the gate is streight, and the way narrow which leadeth vnto life, and few that finde it: how doth it agree with this? Are they few which no man is able to number? Here ye must note that our Sauour speaketh not simply, but in comparison. The multitude of those that shall be saued is very great, if they be considered by themselves, yea they be so many as no man is able to comprehend the number: but if ye compare them with those that shall bee damned, they bee but fewe: their number, I meane the number of the damned, doth in many degrees surmount. When Princes do muster souldiers, if the Captaines should take but ten out of a parish through this land, when they come together they make a great armie: but compared with the multitude of men, women and children which are left behinde, they scarce are missed. And what is this lande to the whole world? and then consider the time, that this innumerable multitude is gathered in so many hundred yeares. Then further, this innumerable multitude dooth stand before the throne, and before the Lambe: which is a great dignitie and happines vnseakable, euen to bee so neere to God, and to be partakers of his glorie. While they be in the world, they bee iudged for the most part to bee so base and vile, and are had in so great contempt, as if they were not worthie in any respect, to come neere the presence of earthly princes, nay not euen to dwell among men: but here they stand all before the high throne. They bee in long white robes, which betokeneth their dignitie, their

their innocencie, and glorie: but of these robes we shall speake more afterward. It is sayd further, that they haue palmes in their hands. It was in old time the manner of conquerors to beare in their hands palmes of victorie. Then it is to shew, that all these are warriors, come out of the battaile as mightie and victorious conquerors. I neede not here enter into the discourse of those things which ye haue been so often taught in, out of diuers places of the Scripture, but especially out of Eph. 6. touching the spirituall warfare. Ye see there what fierce and mightie, and subtil enemies we are continually enuironed withal. The greater or stronger the enemies be, the more glorious is the victorie. Indeeede it is not by their owne strength that they haue preuailed, and carrie palmes in their hands: but through the might of the Lord. Christ Iesus is the king of glorie, he is their head and captaine, he hath in his owne person fought the combate, hee is the Lord that hath shewed himselfe mightie in battaile: for he hath trode downe Sathan, and all the infernall powers: and all his chosen are through faith armed with his power, and so through him do become mightie conquerors, as it is here shewed vnto S. Iohn in vision. The Lord blesse vs, and make vs to be of this heauenly companie.



The sixteenth Sermon.

CAP. 7.

- 10 And they cried with a loude voyce, saying, Saluation commeth of our God, that sitteth vpon the throne, and of the Lambe.
- 11 And all the Angels stood round about the throne, and about the Elders, and the foure beasts, and they fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,
- 12 Saying, Amen. Praise, and glorie, and wisdome, and thanks, and honour, and power, and might, be vnto our God for euermore, Amen.
- 13 And one of the Elders spake, saying vnto me, What are these which are arrayed in long white robes? and whence came they?
- 14 And he sayd vnto him, Lord thou knowest. And he sayd to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and haue washed their long robes, and haue made their long robes white in the blood of the Lambe.
- 15 Therefore are they in the presence of the throne of God, and serue him day and night in his temple, and he that sitteth vpon the throne will dwell among them.
- 16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sunne light on them, neither any heate.

- 17 For the Lambe which is in the middest of the throne, shall gouerne them, and shall leade them vnto the liuely fountaines of waters, and God shall wipe away all teares from their eyes.



We haue noted before, that in this chapter there is set forth vnto vs how the Lord Iesus dooth preserue his Church militant here vpon earth, and euery one of her children in safetie from spirituall infection, euen in the middest of all daungers whatsoeuer, here in the world. He setteth the seale of the liuing God vpon them, and thereby they are preserued. This we haue already handled, and spoken also touching the great number of them, in the former part of this chapter. Now followeth the praise, and thankesgiuing which they offer vp vnto God for their preseruation & deliuerance: and how not onely they, but also all the Angels in heauen doe glorifie him for the same. And then followeth an exposition of the vision in which their good estate is set forth both in this world, and in the world to come. *They cried* (saith S. Iohn) *with a loude voice, saying, Saluation is of our God, that sitteth vpon the throne, and of the Lambe.* Their loude crying and lifting vp their voyce, in ascribing saluation to God, and to the Lambe, doth shew how earnestly, how vehemently, and with how deepe affection of heart they doe render praise to God their Sauour. For the vehement motions of the minde are vsually expressed by the voyce, which vsually is not vehement, vnlesse the minde be vehemently moued. They bee so full of it within, that they cannot vtter it softly. They bee like the vessels of new wine that must haue a vent: for so is it with all that feele the goodnes of God. Indeepe this is a worthie thing, and doth distinguish the true, heartie, and cheerfull praising of God, from that which is but for fashion sake, and hypocriticall, as also from that which is but cold, and negligently done, although with some sinceritie. Wee see men in their anger how strongly they thrust forth their speech, and likewise in their carrell mirth: but when it toucheth the praises of God, they can scarce bee heard, they doe but as it were lispe. What dooth this betoken, but that the heart within hath small feeling of Gods kindnes, and so hath as small delight to praise him? But let vs see what might be the cause that they be thus vehemently affected to offer vpsuch strong praise to God, and to the Lambe. Indeepe here lyeth the cause, that they see God hath miraculously, and after a wonderfull manner saued them out of extreame daungers, by the blood of the Lambe. If wee could see the depth of our miserie and bondage: if we could discern throughly the tyrannous power of sinne, of the diuell, and of death: if wee did well know our owne corruption, and frailtie, and all the strong & subtil assaults of the diuell, & all the daungers that wee are compassed about withall, by meanes of Antichrist; and see in deede that God doth saue vs out of them: it would make vs crie aloud in praising of him, euen with wonderment, at his glorious power, wisdom, and mercifull prouidence. It cometh to passe sometimes, that a man passeth through very

great

great perill, and dooth not espie it while hee is garments, that shall dwell in his wonder, and wonder againe, how he could escape: come they to be thus royally lesse we see but little now in comparison; but when we be of this shining, & haue our eyes opened, and looke backe into the huge gulches, and made out of which we are drawne by the power of God: we shall then cry aloud, that saluation is of God that sitteth vpon the throne, and of the Lambe. This is not like the crye of the Popish Church, which doth ascribe saluation to mans merits. The holy Angels in heauen do see the glorie of this saluation, euen the greatnes of the work, and that it is wholly of God through Christ, and therefore they doe worship, and they doe subscribe to the praise of the Church. For he sayth, *All the Angels stood round about the throne, and about the Elders, and the foure beasts, and they fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen.* And then to shew the infinitenes of his praise, and that they cannot satisfie themselves in praising of him, and that no speech is sufficient fully to expresse his due praises, they heape vp many words, saying: *Praise, and glorie, and wisdom, and thanks, and honour, and power, and might, be vnto our God for euermore, Amen.* This manner of praising God is to be obserued that we may learne it, for it is the right manner. I may truly say, and no man can be so impudent as to deny it, that here is the Catholike praising of God, and of our Lord Iesus Christ, through whose blood hee doth saue vs. That is Catholike, which the whole true Church doth, and all the blessed Angels in heauen: and when we ioine with the Church and with the Angels, then are we in the Catholike faith. And what is that? We see it set downe in these words, *Saluation is of God, that sitteth vpon the throne, and of the Lambe.* The papists in defending mans free will, by extolling mens merits, by seeking iustification by workes, by boasting of their workes of supererogation, and by a thousand such like trumperies of their owne deuising, wherein they seeke remission of sins, and to purchase eternall glorie, doe take away almost the whole praise from God, and from the Lambe of God Iesus Christ, and giue it to creatures. They would leade vs to doe the like with them, and what is their argument which they vrge so much? They say they be Catholike: because so many Popes, so many Cardinals, so many Bishops, so many Doctores, so many Abbots, so many Monkes, so many Friars, so many Nunnes, so many Nations, so many Kings, so many wise Counsellors, haue consented and agreed, and haue held as they hold. They say we haue but a few that consent. Let it be so. What if a man could finde but tenne in a countie that agree in this doctrine and in this praise, with the Church, and with all the holie Angels in heauen: are they not (I speake of that heauenly companie) sufficient to be opposed against the whole rabblements of Friars, of Monkes, of Cardinals, of Popes, yea & to fill vp the number, of all the diuels in hell? Which companie will ye chuse to be Catholike? If a man can finde no one in earth to ioine with him in this faith, that saluation is only of God through the blood of the Lambe, & that God alone is to haue the whole praise of it: let him not be afraid, he is not without companie, & that good companie, for all the Saints & all the Angels in heauen doe ioine with him. He shall be called an heretike, but then the holie Angels be heretikes.

put our trust onely in him, and giue him all the
as is the Catholike confession. Let Friers & Monks,
and ioyne with the Saints and blessed Angels.

Now in the exposition of the vision. First one of the Elders doth aske
of Iohn what these are which are arrayed in long white robes, and whence they
came? We see the Elder doth not demaund this question for to learne, but for to
teach. If any will say then, why doth he which did know, aske him which did not
know? We see it is vsuall, it is to moue attention, and therefore the fittest way to
make vs learne. A father when he will teach his child some matter which the child
indeede seeth, but yet dooth not vnderstand, asketh him what is that which thou
seest there, or what meaneth that? and so the childe is not onely made to see his
want of skill, but also is made desirous, and attentiu to learne what the matter is,
about which the question is demaunded. So Saint Iohn sayth, *Lord thou knowest*,
thereby confessing his ignorance in that matter, and how readie he is to learne.
And then he telleth him first, these are they which came out of great tribulation.
It is then shewed aforehand, that such as will enter into life with Christ, must passe
through great troubles and sorrowes here in the world. The diuell doth enuie
them, the world doth deadly hate them, and many griefes take holde of them.
What then, if this blessed companie enter into ioy and glorie through great afflic-
tion, would we be of them, and yet refuse to suffer afflictions? There be many (as
wee see daily) which take some good liking of the Gospell, but yet they will not
suffer any rebuke for it. They would willingly raigne with Christ, but they refuse
to suffer with him. Let them take heede, if they will keepe the friendship, & seeke
the ease of the world, they can be none of the companie here spoken of: for these
come out of great affliction. Againe, let vs learne here to iudge wisely of the
Church of Christ, and her children: We see them oftentimes in great distresse, rac-
ked and tormented here vpon the earth, which worship the Lord in trueth, euen
after the rules which he hath prescribed in his holy word. We heare how they haue
been murdered vpon heapes, and are in such contempt, so despised, and hated, as
if they were the of-scouring of men: and looke what mischiefe can be deuised and
wrought against them, they shall bee sure to haue it. And thus it seemeth, God
doth not regard, nor careth not for them. That is false, their blood is pretious in his
sight. This warfare is allotted vnto them for their triall; and to their great good: If
the Lord himselfe then doe chastise vs with his owne hands; if the world doe hate
and persecute vs for righteousness sake; and if the diuell stirre vp all manner of
troubles against vs, let vs reioyce and be glad, we be of the multitude here spoken
of. Shall any terror of affliction for a few dayes, driue vs from the possession of so
great glorie, which shall last world without end? Nay, let vs be of good comfort,
let vs be glad, and reioyce that the Lord hath made vs worthe to be of the fellow-
ship here described. For see and consider well what followeth: *They haue washed
their long robes, and haue made their long robes white in the blood of the Lambe.*
What is meant by these long white robes? The innocencie, the holines, the puri-
tie, and glorie in which they stand clothed before the most high God. They may
not

not be naked, neither must they come in filthie garments, that shall dwell in his
presence. But whence haue they this purenes? how come they to be thus royally
clothed? how come they to shine thus in glorie, and to be of this shining, & pure
brihtnes? It is tolde here, that they haue washed their robes, and made them
white in the blood of the Lambe. All Adams children are vncleane and most fil-
thie to behold: but these are come to a fountaine and haue washed themselves,
and made them cleane, otherwise they should haue been cast forth with the rest.
This fountaine is the blood of the Lambe, for that doth cleanse from all sinne. Here
is the worke of faith, here is our iustification, here is the treasure of the Church.
But how can the washing in blood make a thing white? Indeele blood dooth
make red, but the blood of the Lambe, because it cleanseth, and maketh righteous,
and innocent, is sayd to make white. The Papists vaunt much of the indulgences
and pardons giuen by the Pope to take away sinne: They say he hath the dispo-
sing of the Church treasures, the merits of the blood of Martyrs: they glorie of a
righteousnes inherent in mens owne workes: and they haue deuised a number of
things to purge away sinne, yea some they send vnto the fire of purgatorie. None
of all this heavenly companie haue light into their hands: for here is no mention
of any thing wherewith they haue been washed, but onely in the blood of the
Lambe. Againe, if their righteousness and innocencie were inherent, sticking in
them as their owne, euen by the merit of their owne workes, how should it bee
compared to a robe that is put vpon one? That which wee haue not of our owne
but by imputation, as the righteousness of Christ through faith, that is fitly resem-
bled by a garment, yea by a large and goodly garment put vpon vs. Beloued, the
blood of the Lambe, his merits, his righteousness, his innocencie, are sufficient to
clothe vs in the presence of God: let vs stedfastly beleue and trust to the same,
let vs seeke to bee washed and sanctified in him: and let the popish sort alone
with their pardons, their purgatorie fire, and all their other wares which they sell
for money. Such as will haue saluation among them, must buy it with their silver.
Let them keepe their markets by themselves, and let vs wash vs only in the blood
of the Lambe. Renounce those stinking inuentions of Antichrist, which derogate
from the glorie of Christs passion. If any thing can purge but his blood, surely then
the purging by his blood is of no exceeding glorie: for that is but meane which
hath such companions. Moreouer, by this puritie through the blood of Christ, the
faithfull are reconciled and brought into fauour with God, he receiueth them into
his presence, euen into the presence of his glorie, to dwell with him, to serue him,
and to be partakers of his glorie, to be vnder his protection from all harmes, and to
liue blessedly in ioyes for euer. For it followeth, *Therefore they are in the presence
of the throne of God, and serue him day and night in his temple, and he that sitteth
vpon the throne will dwell among them.* O how great a dignitie is this, vnto which
our blessed Sauour hath aduanced vs? Let vs thankfully receiue it, let vs long to
come to it, let vs lift vp our hearts from this miserable world. We shall dwell with
the great king of glorie: in what honour and blisse shall we bee then? what shall
bee able to hurt vs any more? Indeele while the children of God liue vpon the
earth,

earth, they be tossed and turnioyled with many miseries. They be persecuted, they be driven out of their countrie, they be imprisoned, they be poore, they bee destitute, they be hungry, they be thirstie, they suffer heate, and cold, and wearines; they be sicke, they be subiect to a thousand mischiefes and dangers: but now they shall be rid from all miseries and incombrances. For he saith, *They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sunne light on them, neither any heate.* By these are vnderstood all calamities and oppressions, and miseries, which we indure while we be here: not onely in bodie, but also in soule. Men seeke euery way to hurt vs, in our bodies, in our goods, in our names, and in our liues. The diuell he assaulteth, he tempteth, he terrifieth, he raiseth all that he can against vs. The Lord correcteth, scourgeth and chasteneth, as a father dooth nurture his children, that they may reuerence him, and stand in awe. What sorrowes, what sighes, what groanes, what mournings, and what teares doe arise from hence, who is able to expresse? How often doe these things come one in the necke of another, euen as the waues of the sea when it is tossed with mightie windes? How terrible vnto flesh and bloud is death it selfe, which we are all sure we must come vnto? And where is the comfort, but only in this, that after a little time, euen of triall of our faith and patience, our gracious God will rid vs of them all? That he will bring vs out of this trouble some sea, vnto the haven of rest? Seeing it is thus, let vs not faint, but take courage and bee strong to beare all aduersities. All the elect of God come out of great affliction. Why should we not remember this, and not be cast downe in our temptations, as if it were our case alone, or as if God had forsaken vs? If we endure and suffer affliction as good souldiers of Christ, wee shall stand before the throne of God ere it bee long, with palmes in our hands, and clothed in long white robes of dignitie and glorie. For our time of triall, our time of pilgrimage is but for a few dayes: if we be pinched with pouertie, if we suffer hunger and thirst, or be any way in distresse, God will put an end speedily. We shall be with the Lambe, euen with that blessed Lambe of God which taketh away the sinnes of the world. The Lambe shall be our shepheard, and shall guide, and feede vs with all good things: For he saith, *The Lambe which is in the midst of the throne shall gouerne them, and shall leade them vnto the liuely fountaines of waters.* Can a Lambe then bee a shepheard? Yea such a Lambe as this, for he is in the midst of the throne. He is a Lambe to the flocke, but yet so full of all might and power, that he is a most victorious lyon vnto all the wolues, and deuouring beasts. The Prophet Dauid, Psal. 23. proclaimeth the Lord to bee his shepheard, and therefore he shall lacke nothing. He lodgeth him safe in the folds or cotes, where there is plentie of greene pasture. He leadeth him vnto the pleasant streames of still waters, both to coole heate, and to quench thirst, and other duties he setteth foorth of a shepheard. They be all included in this, that the Lambe shall gouerne them, and leade them to the fountaines of liuing waters. The Lambe then bringeth vs vnto God, & the Lambe feedeth vs when we be there with all heavenly and spirituall dainties. He is rich, for it hath pleased the father, that in him al fulnes should dwell, Coloss. 1. How should they hunger, how should they thirst any more, or how should any euill come nigh them,

them, whom he doth guide, and whom he leadeth to the waters of life? Well and blessed, and a thousand, and tenne thousand times blessed is he that is a sheepe in this flocke: he shall drinke his fill of the waters of life. But what are these waters of life, or liuing waters, whereof the streames do runne continually? Our Saviour saith, He that beleueth in me, as saith the Scripture, out of his belly shall flow riuers of water of life. This (saith the Euangelist) spake he of the spirit, which they that beleued in him should receiue: for the spirit was not yet giuen, because Iesus was not yet glorified, Ioh. 7. vers. 38. 39. We shall then liue by the spirit: the life of God shall be in vs: wee shall be filled with ioy and comfort vnspeakeable: we shall be in honour and glorie for euermore. All our miseries, trauales and sorrowes which we endure in this world, shall be quite forgotten and vanish away. For he saith, *God shall wipe away all teares from their eyes.* If there were no teares in their eyes while they be here, yea if there were not many and plentifull (as the Prophet saith, thou giuest thy people plentie of teares to drinke, and as the Prophet Dauid saith, he watred his bed, and made his couch to swimme with teares) it should not be sayd, *God shall wipe away all teares from their eyes.* They be great sorrowes and griefes that doe cause men to weepe and lament: yea such valiant men as Dauid was. Thinke not then while ye be here to liue in delicacie and pleasures of the flesh, & yet to come to the heavenly ioyes. No, remember what Christ saith, *Blessed are ye that weepe now, for ye shall laugh,* Luk. 6. vers. 21. *And woe be vnto ye which laugh now, for ye shall lament and weepe,* Luk. 6. vers. 25. It is much better to weepe here in afflictions for a little time, and to reioyce for euermore in the world to come, with ioy vnspeakeable and glorious; then to haue delight in the pleasures of sinnes for a season, and afterward to mourne for euer in the torments of hell. Thus haue wee seene, that not onely the Martyrs which be of the Church triumphant, are in safetie, but also the Church militant in earth. They are gone before, kept by the power of God in the time that they continued in the battaile: the same power of the Lord shall keepe vs, and we shall follow, and bee ioyned with them. They trusted in the Lord, and he did not faile them: let vs trust constantly, and continue faithfull euen vnto the death, and wee shall finde him the same vnto vs, that he was vnto them. For hath he not made the same promise, and dooth he not loue his people as well now as hee did then? For shall wee thinke that hee is changeable? or that he will not regard those that trust in him? he is the shepheard ouer the whole flocke, which shall be euen to the worlds end. And seeing we be now in exceeding great dangers, in these euill dayes (as the last times are perilous) assure your selues he hath a speciall care ouer vs. O how miserable and wretched are they which despise such a shepheard, and will not bee fed by him? Let vs daily vpon our knees instantly begge of God, that we neuer come to be of that number of such despisers. And thus much for this time.

The



The seuenteenth Sermon.

CAP. 8.

- 1 And when he had opened the seuenth scale, there was silence in heauen about halfe an houre.
- 2 And I saw the seuen Angels which stood before God, and to them were giuen seuen trumpets.
- 3 Then another Angel came and stood before the altar hauing a golden censer, and much odours was giuen vnto him, that he should offer with the prayers of all Saints vpon the golden altar, which is before the throne.
- 4 And the smoke of the odours, with the prayers of the Saints, went up before God, out of the Angels hand.
- 5 And the Angell tooke the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth, and there were voyces, and thundrings, and lightnings and earthquakes.
- 6 Then the seuen Angels, which had the seuen trumpets, prepared themselves to blow the trumpets.
- 7 So the first Angel blew the trumpet, and there was haile and bloud, mingled with fire, and they were cast into the earth, and the third part of trees was burnt, and all greene grasse was burnt.
- 8 And the second Angell blew the trumpet, and as it were a great mountaine burning with fire was cast into the sea, and the third part of the sea became bloud.
- 9 And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea and had life dyed, and the third part of the ships were destroyed.
- 10 Then the third Angell blew the trumpet, and there fell a great starre from heauen, burning like a torch, and it fell into the third part of the riuers, and into the fountaines of waters.
- 11 And the name of the starre is called Wormewood, therefore the third part of the waters became wormewood, and many men dyed of the waters, because they were made bitter.
- 12 And the fourth Angell blew the trumpet, and the third part of the sunne was smitten, and the third part of the Moone, and the third part of the starres, so that the third part of them was darkened: and the day was smitten, that the third parte of it could not shine, and likewise the night.

13 And

- 13 And I beheld, and heard one Angel flying in the midst of heauen, saying with a loude voyce, Woe, Woe, Woe, to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the sounds to come, of the three Angels which were yet to blow the trumpets.



E are now come to the opening of the last scale. For the booke, which was in the right hand of him that sat vpon the throne, was sealed with seuen scales: sixe are already past, and now the Lamb openeth the seuenth. This reacheth vnto the last iudgement, which is at the second coming of Christ, and therefore vnder this all things are finished. The opening of things vnder this scale are diuided into seuen parts, at the sounding of seuen trumpets, and vnder the last of those trumpets (as wee may see in the latter end of the eleuenth chapter) is the day of iudgement described. And in the tenth chapter, the Angell sweareth that there shall be no more time, but in the dayes of the voyce of the seuenth Angell, when he shall begin to blow the trumpet. The visions then, which follow from the beginning of the twelfth chapter to the end of this prophetic, doe set forth more largely, and more cleerely, some speciall things, which are described more darkly in the opening of the scales. For the booke sealed with the seuen scales, containeth all the whole matters which were to be reueiled. Now to the words as they lye. Saint Iohn sayth, that when he had opened the seuenth scale, there was silence in heauen for the space of halfe an houre. What should this silence meane? Some say it signifieth consultation; that as kings and mightie princes, when they enterprise great and waightie matters, consult with mature deliberation: so, though God neede not any consultation, knowing al, and hauing in his infinit wisdom decreed all things: yet to represent to vs that very great things are in hand, and that both Iohn and all other might bee prepared with due attention to receiue them, this silence is continued for halfe an houre. Others doe take it to set forth astonishment: as namely, that at the opening of this scale, there appeare such dreadfull iudgements of God to be executed vpon the world, that all the heauenly companie are astonished and abashed to behold. Which of these is meant I will not stand to discusse, because they come both to the same effect, for to declare the greatnes of the matters now in hand. Great and grievous things were reueiled vnder the opening of some of the former scales: but now follow greater, and more grievous. For here commeth the kingdome of the great Antichrist, and all the horrible plagues which goe with it: as also the full powring forth of Gods wrath at the last day. So that it is no maruile though S. Iohn saw the eleu sealed vp, and set in safetie, when such things should fall out. Then next S. Iohn saw seuen Angels, to whom were giuen seuen trumpets. The Angels are Gods seruants, and ministers, which are in a readines to doe his will. But what doe the seuen trumpets represent? for we must take it that they signifie somewhat. They do represent that God commeth against the world as an enemy vnto battaile, euen proclaiming open warre with the sound of trum-

pets.

pets. For askings when they goe to battaile, and their armies meete to set each vpon other, doe it by sounding of trumpets, proclaiming thereby their enmitie and purpose of warre: so the Lord God, seeing how cruelly his seruants haue been dealt withall, how his holy Gospell hath been despised, hated and persecuted, and his name dishonoured and blasphemed, commeth vpon the world as an enemy with the sound of trumpets vnto battaile. For before the powring forth of euery iudgement, an Angell soundeth a trumpet. Woe bee to the wicked world when God is thus displeased, and commeth against them vnto battaile. It may make vs tremble and quake for feare, if we bee not senseles as stones or blockes, to behold the publication of Gods wrath: for if wee bee partakers with the world in these sinnes, we shall also be partakers of the plagues. But if the most high bee thus displeased for the cruell misusing of his seruants, for the abusing of his Gospell, and for all the wicked abominable vices committed, that he commeth with the sound of the trumpet one after another to proclaim open enmitie and battaile: what shall become of the Church in earth, or how shall it goe with her, in the midst of his hot displeasure? The Church hath a mediator, and when the displeasure and wrath of God doth most of all shew it selfe, yet she is remembred, and is in safetie with all her children, her prayers coming vp before God, and being accepted through the same mediator, she also receiueth heavenly gifts and spiritual graces. This is shewed manifestly in the next words, when S. Iohn saith, *another Angell came and stood before the altar hauing a golden censer, &c.* The Rhemish Papists hauing no warrant in the holie word of God to maintaine their deuises, yet to blind the ignorant, lay hold where there seemeth to be any shew: As here they say, the priest standing at the altar praying and offering for the people in the time of the high mysteries, Christ himselfe being present vpon the altar, is a figure of this thing, which the Angell doth here at the altar, and thereto he alludeth. Woe be those which are so blind, as to bee carried away with such geere as this, to beleue the popish sacrificing priesthood, and the abominable Masse. There is no Scripture either for their altar, their priesthood, or sacrifice: how shall wee then thinke that there is an allusion in the Scripture to things which by the holy Scripture are not warranted? This is manifest, that in the old law there was a golden altar, and a golden censer, in which the priest did burne sweete incense before the Lord, which did figure the mediation of Christ, in which the prayers of the Saints are acceptable: to this figure we are sure he alludeth in this vision. For hauing the Scripture to warrant that, the very speeches doe also accord. There is a golden altar, a golden censer, and sweete odours described in Moses, and so are here. As the priesthood and mediation of Christ was figured by these in time of the Law, so how can we say that the same figure now in vision, doth signifie any other thing? The holy Sacrament of the Lords Supper is the same that Christ did first administer with his owne hands, sitting at the table with his twelue Apostles: and if that their Masse were not a filthie prophanatio, but a figure of this heavenly vision, the was Christ in that action a figure of it also. How wicked and absurd a thing is this? Again, what resemblance can there bee, or what figure in a priest offering a

flaine

flaine sacrifice propitiatorie, (for in the Masse they glorie that they offer vp the very bodie of Christ crucified and his blood that was shed) and a priest offering incense vpon an altar that is not an altar of flaine sacrifice, but onely to offer sweete odours? Alas, shall poore blind people bee still seduced by such impudent cauls? But they are yet more shameles in abusing this place of Scripture. For as they would beare me in hand that their popish Masse is so glorious a thing, as that this heavenly vision doth allude vnto it: so they would proue that the Angels in heauen, doe offer vp to God the prayers of the Saints in earth, because this Angell offereth with the prayers of all Saints. Thus they finde a way to breake in and to spoile the Lord Iesus of his glorie, who is the onely high priest, and the onely Mediatour betweene God and man, and indeede the beloued sonne in whom alone the Father is well pleased, *Matth. 3.* But yet they are here grauelled diuers wayes, the matter dooth not fall out to fit their turne. For first they dare not affirme that this Angell is not Christ himselfe: but say thus: If this bee S. Michael, or any Angell, and not Christ himselfe, as some take it, then Angels offer vp the prayers of the faithfull. Where doe ye finde that Aaron with his golden censer with sweet odors at the golden altar, was a figure of any but of the Lord Iesus? Did Aaron and his sonnes represent any Angell? Then how will they perswade that this is any Michael, or any Angell besides Christ? For doth he not performe that which was figured by those things vnder the law? Indee the things are finished, but yet for our capacitie the same are set forth againe vnto vs in the vision, by the ceremonial figure. For how should that heavenly and inuisible thing the mediation of Christ, be more fitly shewed to vs by vision, then vnder that figure by which it was shadowed out in time of the law? Who is the priest figured but the Lord Iesus? Who is the golden altar, but the Lord Iesus? What are the sweete odours with which the prayers of all Saints come vp before God, but the most sweete mediation of the Lord Iesus? For it is sayd, there was much odours giuen vnto him that he might offer with the prayers of all Saints, vpon the golden altar which is before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the Saints went vp before God, out of the Angels hand. This may seeme to be somewhat to proue it was not Christ himselfe, because the odours are giuen him. But the Scripture saith, yea Christ saith, all things are giuen vnto me of my father, and this is called the revelation of Iesus Christ, which God gaue him. It is the most sweete incense of Christs mediation, with which all the most holy place in heauen is perfumed. It is that sweete incense of his mediation in which God is well pleased, and delighted, with which our prayers ascend as it were mixed with it, and so become also sweete and delightfome vnto God. Indee without these odours our prayers could not be sweete and pleasant to God. For how can any sweete thing proceede out of so corrupt and stinking vessels as we be? but they are sanctified in him, and made sweete with his sweet odors. The Lord is delighted with the sweetnes of his sonne, & the prayers of the whole Church come vp before him, mixed & seasoned with his sweetnes, therefore he cannot but bee also delighted with them. Then secondly vpon these words that the Angell doth offer with the prayers of

all

all Saints, our Rhemists doe confesse that by Saints here, as also in other places of Scripture, are meant holy persons in earth. Indeepe it is a thing euident by the word of God, that all true beleeuers haue this honourable and glorious title giuen them, and of right belonging vnto them, to be called Saints euen while they liue vpon the earth. Why then hath it been the vse in poperie, and is still among all the ignorant blind papists, to account none Saints but such as are dead, and the same canonized by the Pope? Though (say they, euen the Rhemish papists) it be not against the Scriptures, that the inferiour Saint or Angell in heauen should offer their prayers to God by their superiour there. Behold into what vaine speculations men are carried, when they are bold to set themselues against the truth. What an infinite heape of Martyrs may the carnall reason of man imagine, and say they be not against the Scriptures? But let vs see how this ouerthroweth their owne diuinitie, and what absurdities it carrieth with it. If the inferiour Angell doe offer vp his prayer to God by his superiour, then this Angell is aboue all, for he offereth the prayers of all Saints. And the Papists say the blessed Virgin is Ladie and Queene of heauen, and so superiour to all Angels. How cometh it then that she looseth her place? why doth not she as the most worthie mediatrix next Christ, offer vp the prayers of all Saints? And if the inferiour Saint or Angell offer his prayer by his superiour, then this Angell offereth her prayer among the rest: for he offereth with the prayers of all Saints, and she is one among the Saints. How shall she offer vp prayers, and bee a mediatrix for others, when her owne prayers are offered to God by another? For as I say, this Angell offereth with the prayers of all Saints: and this Angell offereth alwayes, and none but he: seeing this vision doth set forth not what was done at one time, but what was and is done so long as the Church doth and shall continue vpon the earth. If this Angell then offer vp the prayers of all Saints, and at all times (as it is manifest) where is the mediation of the Virgin Mary, and of other Saints and Angels? whose prayers doe they offer vp, if one offer with the prayers of all? Again, if an inferiour Saint or Angell be to offer their prayers to God by their superiour Saints or Angels: then is it not lawfull for any inferiour Saint to make a petition to God, but by the mediation of a superiour. What diuinitie is this? Let it passe, let them alone. It followeth that the Angell (which ye see is the Lord Iesus Christ) tooke the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth, and there were voyces, and thundrings, and lightnings, and earthquakes. This sentence is diuersly expounded by diuers: because fire in the holy Scriptures representeth diuers things. It is terrible to behold flaming fire, it consumeth and burneth vp with sharpe and bitter paine. And for that cause, the wrath of God is compared to fire. Also it pearceth, it purgeth in burning out drosse, and giueth heate: and for that the holy Ghost is called fire, and represented by fire. As Iohn the Baptist speaketh of Christ, saying, he shall baptize ye with the holy Ghost and with fire, Matth. 3. And there appeared vnto them clouen tongues, as it were of fire, Act. 2. which were the gifts of the holy Ghost. For he pearceth deepe, he burneth out drosse, and purgeth the hearts of the faithfull, he setteth them also on fire with burning loue and zeale of Gods glorie.

Let

Let vs see then which of these is represented by the censer filled with the fire of the altar and cast downe into the earth. They that take it here to be the wrath of God cast downe by Christ vpon the world, say that the voyces, the lightnings, thundrings, and earthquake, are the terrible signes, and tokens of his wrath. But seeing all the plagues which God sendeth downe in the opening of the seuenth scale, are at the sounding of the seuen trumpets, there is no reason to take this fire of the altar for to signifie Gods wrath, but indeede for the holy Ghost, euen for those heauenly gifts which Christ bestoweth. Through the mediation of Christ the prayers of the Church come vp before the throne and are heard, and the heauenly fire, euen the gifts of the holy Ghost are thereupon sent downe: who can deny this to be true? then follow voyces, for the glorious Gospell is sounded forth, by the operation of the holy Ghost, Christ is constantly professed, the world is reprobued of sinne, of righteousness, and of iudgement, Ioh. 16. The diuel is disturbed in his kingdom: he rageth full of wrath. The tyrants and worldlings are also molested: here vpon are raised vp all manner of broyles, tumults, vprores, and commotions, with cruell persecutions and horrible slaughters, which are represented by thundrings, lightnings, and earthquake. Wee must euer looke for such stittes at the preaching of the Gospell: it cannot bee otherwise, while there bee diuels. Hauiug thus set forth the mediation of Christ for his Church, and how he sendeth downe his spirit vpon her, by which she is comforted and guided: he returneth to set forth the plagues to be powred forth vnder this seuenth scale. And first as he sayth, the seuen Angels which had the seuen trumpets, prepared themselues to blow the trumpets. These heauenly messengers are most readie to execute the wil and the commandment of God without any doubting or reasoning: for they know he is most holy and iust in all his iudgements, and no crueltie proceedeth from him. They sound the trumpets the of defiance, and proclaime open warre from God, against the wicked world. It is hard to declare euery particular, but I will wade no deeper then the cleere light and doctrine of the Scriptures may shew the bottome, and as it were the safe places where to tread. First therefore it is manifest that here are dreadfull plagues powred forth from God almightie, being highly offended. Secondly, it cannot be restrained to corporall punishments, but indeede the plagues are chiefly spirituall. Thirdly, we are not to take it that a seuerall plague is powred forth at the sounding of euery trumpet, but the same vnder diuers figures in sundrie of them. This withal, that there is an vniuersalitie, and a progression from lesse to greater in the plagues. For that an vniuersall plague might be shewed as it were vpon all parts of the world: in the sounding of the first foure trumpets, the world is diuided into the earth, the sea, the riuers, and the heuens, through all which the plagues are spread. So that ye can looke no where, but all is ouerspread with the wrath of God, and with terrible iudgements. The first Angell blew the trumpet, and there was haile and blood mingled with fire, and they were cast into the earth, and the third part of trees were burnt, and all greene grasse was burnt. We may not take these things literally, of haile and blood, and fire indeede mingled together, nor of the very trees and greene grasse burnt vp: for such a thing hath not bin

M

heard

heard of since Christ. But vnder these there are spirituall plagues figured: as wee may consider in particular: for haile is a thing that doth beate downe corne, and destroy the frutes of the earth, and so hurteth many wayes. Bloud doth cause to corrupt and putrefie. Fire doth consume and waste. As these three should be mingled together in some horrible tempest, and cast vpon the earth: so vpon men, yea euen in the visible Church, a tempest of spirituall haile, bloud and fire, that is, of errors, lyes, and strong delusions, is cast downe, ouerspreadeth and wasteth grievously. Thus much may suffice for the sounding of the first trumpet.

The second Angell soundeth the trumpet, and this apostasie by Antichrists kingdome first figured by such a terrible tempest, is represented by a great mountaine burning with fire, and cast into the sea. A thing most horrible to looke vpon: but such as the world hath iustly deserued by refusing to receiue the loue of the cruceth. This burning mountaine dooth corrupt and destroy: for the third part of the sea is turned into bloud: the third part of the creatures which had life in the sea dyed, and the third part of shippes were destroyed. The people indeede are as an huge sea of many waters: and this mountaine is very great which falleth vpon them. The third Angell dooth blow the trumpet, and there fell a great starre from heauen burning like a torch, and it fell into the third part of the riuers, and fountaines of waters. And the name of the starre is called Wormewood, therefore the third part of the waters became wormewood, and many men dyed of the waters, because they were made bitter. This doth most fitly set forth the fall and declining of the pastors of the Church. It is euident that the starres in this booke bee the pastors, chap. 1. This is a great starre, representing very many pastors and teachers. For many did decline and corrupt the pure doctrine: or at the least it did represent some speciall great one which drew many downe with him. As when some pastor of great account and authoritie decline, many droppe downe with him. This great starre doth fall from heauen, when those Bishops which succeeded the former did degenerate, were lifted vp in pride, and in steede of shining with the light of pure doctrine of the heavenly word, did set vp and maintaine their owne inuentions, and liued vicious liues. This starre falleth into the riuers and fountaines of waters, which men do drinke of. The doctrine of Gods word is the waters, euen the most pure waters which are giuen to the Church continually to drinke of. These waters are most sweete, comfortable, and hole some of themselves. This starre falleth into them, and infecteth them: for by little and little the teachers mixed their owne deuises with the word: they infected with false expositions, mingled and poysoned the waters, making them bitter: and hereupon it followeth that many did dye and perish. But seeing the corrupt doctrine, which is agreeable to the sinful nature of man, is so sweete and delight some vnto the blind superstitious people, that they greedily sucke it in, and are neuer filled; how can it be sayd that the waters become bitter? I answer to this: that the pure doctrine of Gods word is sweete and comfortable, because it worketh peace in the conscience, and ioy in the holy Ghost. The false doctrine though at the first taste it seeme sweete, yet because it destroyeth the iustificati on, and reconciliation through faith in

in the bloud of Christ, taking away all peace of conscience, and spirituall ioy, filling the heart with doubts, and tortures, it is most bitter. For what can bee more bitter then in steede of a lively feeling through faith, that wee are reconciled to God through the bloud of his sonne, and in steede of the spirit of adoption by which we are sanctified, which beareth witnes to our spirits that we are the children of God, to haue the doubts and tortures of conscience, which I say doe follow of superstitious and corrupt doctrine? The assurance of faith, or full perswasion of the remission of sinnes, is condemned of the papists as high presumption: and to bee in doubt is deemed great humilitie.

In the next place followeth the sounding of the fourth trumpet, at which Saint Iohn sayth, the third part of the Sunne was smitten, & the third part of the Moone, and the third part of the starres, so that the third part of them was darkened: and the day was smitten, that the third part of it could not shine, & likewise the night. This darkening the third part of the Sunne, the Moone and the starres, figureth the darknes brought vpon the Church by such teachers as did daily more and more degenerate. The light of the holy Scriptures, the light of heavenly doctrine was quenched and darkened. This tempest of haile, bloud, and fire, the great mountaine burning, the starre falling into the riuers, and the darkening of the Sunne, the Moone and the starres, are most horrible plagues: but yet not to the vter desolation of the Church, nor yet the full setting vp of Antichrist: for in euery one there is mentioned but a third part destroyed, and more grievous things doe follow. This cursed kingdome began and proceeded by degrees, and the fulnes of it is set forth in the sounding of the fift trumpet. And that wee might know the greatest plagues are yet behind at the sounding of the three trumpets which remaine, an Angell doth flye in the middest of heauen, and with a loude voyce proclaimeth woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth, for the sounds of the three trumpets which remaine. The woes indeede are denounced but vpon the inhabitants of the earth, that is, vpon the children of this world: for no one of the elect shall bee hurt by them with spirituall hurt, so farre as to destroy them. As in the former, so in these, the Lord preferueth his Church, they were all sealed with the seale of God. But we must note, that albeit great and terrible plagues haue beene already reuealed, yet the three that remaine exceede them all.



The eighteenth Sermon.

CHAP. 9.

- 1 And the fift Angell blew the trumpet, and I saw a starre which fell from heauen vnto the earth, and to him was giuen the key of the bottomles pit.
- 2 And he opened the bottomles pit, and there arose the smoke of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace, and the Sunne and the ayre were darkened by the smoke of the pit.
- 3 And there came out of the smoke Locusts vpon the earth, and to them was giuen power, as the Scorpions of the earth haue power.
- 4 And it was commanded them, that they should not hurt the grasse of the earth, neither any greene thing, neither any tree, but only those men which haue not the seale of God in their foreheads.
- 5 And to them was commanded that they should not kill them, but that they should bee vexed fise moneths, and their paine should be as the paine that commeth of a Scorpion, when he hath stung a man.
- 6 Therefore in those dayes shall men seeke death, and shall not finde it, and shall desire to dye, but death shall flye from them.
- 7 And the forme of the Locusts, was like vnto horses prepared vnto battaile, and on their heads were as it were crownes of gold, and their faces were like the faces of men.
- 8 And they had haire as the haire of women and their teeth were as the teeth of lions.
- 9 And they had habbergions like to habbergions of yron, and the sound of their wings, was like the sound of chariots, when many horses runne vnto the battaile.
- 10 And they had tailes like vnto Scorpions, and there were stings in their tailes, and their power was to hurt men fise moneths.
- 11 And they haue a king ouer them which is the Angell of the bottomles pit, whose name in hebreue is Abaddon, and in greeke he is called Apollyon, that is, destroying.

I Noted vnto ye the last time, that the three woes to come are the three last woes, and the three greatest woes reuealed in this booke, and therefore proclaimed by an Angell flying in the middest of heauen with this voyce, woe, woe, woe, &c And now we come at the sounding of the fift trumpet vnto the first of them. It is a woe of darknes, yea of most horrible spiritual darknes, and of dead-

ly

ly poysonsome stinging vermine, which come with the darknes. Wee will looke vpon it, as it lyeth in order. When the fift Angell blew the trumpet, Iohn sawe a starre fall from heauen vnto the earth. Here is a starre falling from heauen, the bringer in of this great woe. Some doe take it that this is the starre which fell at the sounding of the third trumpet: because the participle is of the time perfectly past. I cannot thinke so, vnlesse S. Iohn had vsed the greeke participle, so that it might bee sayd, I saw that starre which fell. I take this sufficient to proue it to be another starre. Some take this starre for an Angell comming downe speedily from heauen, sent of God to open the bottomles pit. But how shall that be so, when starres in this booke doe signifie no other Angels, but the Angels of the Churches, as chap. 1 that is, the ministers of the Gospel? This starre therefore that here falleth, is some great Minister, and of high estimation in the Church, as his power giuen vnto him may teach vs to see. And if ye demand who it was. I answer, the Church of Rome was a right worthie and famous Church. The Bishops of Rome were excellent men many of them succeeding each other, and suffered martyrdom for the Gospell. They declined, and grew worse and worse, so farre as to become the great Antichrist. This starre being of marueilous account, falling from the heauenly brightnes of the doctrine contained in Gods word, and from the true godlines, vnto humane inuentions, and wicked life, retaineth still an exceeding great power to doe hurt. He hath giuen vnto him the key of the bottomles pit: Satan by him brocheth in all his hellish doctrine. The papists boast that the power which their Pope hath exercised so long, is the keyes of heauen, and that at his pleasure he can send and let men in there: and so the Pope doth promise eternall life at his pleasure. But the trueth is, that his power is the key of hell, that key is giuen vnto him, to bring in diuellish doctrine, ignorance of the trueth, darknes, idolatrie, superstition, and all wicked errors: for he openeth the bottomles pit, and the smoke thereof, yea so darke a smoke commeth vp, that the light of the Sunne and of the ayre are darkened. We did see how at the sounding of the fourth trumpet the third part of the Sunne, and the third part of the Moone, and the third part of the starres was stricken, so that the third part did not shine: this was a great diminishing of the light, but nothing comparable to the darknes here set forth. The course of the Gospell was stayed (as we see the foure Angels held the foure windes) mans deuises and superstition greatly increased, the cleere light of the most pure doctrine was much dimmed, and so by little and little Antichrist was exalted: and when he was come to his full strength, the pit of hell being opened, that Satan might send forth what strong delusion he would, the case is farre more miserable then before. Marke what similitude here is vsed: For like as the Sunne with his bright beames doth pearce through and lighten the ayre, and so we haue light vnto these our bodily eyes here vpon the earth; and if a thicke darke smoke arise it darkeneth the ayre, and keepeth the light of the Sunne backe, from vs: So Christ Iesus with his glorious Gospell, shining vpon the Church, the smoke of the pit of hell, euen the illusions of the diuell, the inuentions of men, idolatrie, errors, and superstition doe darken, or keepe backe the bright beames thereof from men. Wee may plainly

M 3

see

see by this place, that in the kingdome of Antichrist, grosse and palpable darkenes doth ouerspread all: and that men are ignorant of the truth, and couered in blindness, by reason of the thick smoake arising out of the bottomlesse pit. The doctrine & worship of deuils is now set vp: this being one proper and infallible note of that horrible kingdome, it is requisite that I should stay a little vpon it. And if any man will object that it is not certaine, that this is a description of the kingdome of Antichrist; I say it is most vndoubtedly certaine, and without all controuersie, a description of Antichrists full exaltation: and if men bee not wilfully blind, they can not but see and confesse so much. For is it not certaine, yea so certaine that the most impudent aduersaries can not denie, that among other plagues the great plague vpon the world by Antichrist, is reuealed in this booke? Is it not also manifest that in the opening of the seuen scales all things are reuealed which should happen, euen to the ende of the worlde? and therefore at the sounding of the seuenth trumpet is the day of iudgement, as we see in the latter end of the eleuenth chapter: and as the Angell in the next chapter doth sweare that there shall be no more time when the seuenth Angell shall beginne to sound the trumpet, and that the mysterie of God shall be finished. For all that followeth from the beginning of the twelfth chap. is but larger descriptiō & plainer, of some things gone before in the opening of the scales. Moreover, is it not out of doubt, that the kingdome of Antichrist is one of the greatest plagues? And will yee call into question whether the three woes denounced by the Angel, be the three greatest? The last of the three is the dreadful day of iudgement: the last sauing one, is the horrible kingdome (as we shall see) of the Turke: and the first of the three, (which is this that we are now in hand withall) is the wicked kingdome of Antichrist. A starre fallen, a great minister of the gospell still in title, to whom the key of the bottomlesse pit is giuen, is the head of this kingdome next vnder the deuill. This one point yee see, is most euident by the wordes of the text, whereby wee come to a second point: namely, that the poperie is this kingdome, which indeed is more fully declared in the chapters following: but yet to be proued by this. For what kingdome of such power, as to agree with the description here following can be found, that hath a starre fallen to be the head thereof, but the papacie? let it be shewed if they can through the vniuersall world? And now to come further, and to proue it by the darknes which ariseth by the smoake of the pit: is any so senseles as not to take it of spirituall darknes? Is it meant that a smoake shall arise out of the pit of hell, and darken the ayre which we draw in, and the sun in the firmament, which shineth to our bodily eyes? No; let the most obstinate and rankest papiste in the worlde deny if hee can, that this darkning is not the darkning of the Gospell, in which Christ shineth to the Church, as the sunne to the world. Let such an one also if he can denie, that this smoake is not the darkenes of Satans kingdome, ignorance of the mysteries of Christs gospell, through mens inuentions and blind errors. And doth not this fitly agree to the poperie? was not the gospell buried among them? were not all maner of humane traditions, errors, lies, superstition, and idolatrie, set vp in stead thereof? were not the people kept in such exceeding darknes, as that they receiued and were fed with all maner of lies,

yea

yea so grosse, as their legends and festiuals doe witnes, that children doe wonder how men could be brought to beleue them? haue not the papists alwaies, and do not the Iesuites as farre as they dare for shame still maintaine, that ignorance is the mother of deuotion? God gaue his word in olde time to his people by Moses, and the prophets in their owne language, willing all to reade it, and to meditate in it night and day, as ye may reade in many places. The holy Apostles deliuered to the Churches the whole doctrine of the gospell, and taught them all the counsels of God in the tongue which they vnderstood, exhorting all pastours to be diligent in teaching, and all people to let the word dwell plenteously among them: which is cleane contrarie to that doctrine and practise of the papists. For they keepe the scriptures from the people, they will haue them kept blind without any light, least they should espie their treacheries and falshood, and so refuse to sup vp those filthy stinking poysoned dregges which they doe giue them. And who hath brought in all this darkenes or smoake of hell, but that starre fallen from heauen, which hath the key of the bottomlesse pit? Beloued, if the word of God be true, (which I trust no man here is so wicked to doubt of) the poperie is this darke kingdome, and the pope that starre which hath opened the pitte of hell, and brought in such horrible darkenes and confusion. If they can shewe likelihood in any other, let them, that it may be discussed. Then next he sayth, There came out of the smoake locusts vpon the earth, and vnto them was giuen power, as the scorpions of the earth haue power. Here is a further miserie, for beside the plague of darknes, there commeth from the smoake an other plague of the locustes: For as the smoake of the bottomlesse pit doth darken the sunne, so of the same smoake the locustes are bred. Let vs see what this representeth. Locustes are but a vile vermine, but yet great swarmes of them doe eate vp and destroye the greene things and fruites of the earth, and make a fruitfull land wast: as ye may read the description of them, Ioe. 2. These which are here spoken of bee not common locustes, but haue also the deadly poyson and power of scorpions, to sting and torment men to death. This is a most pestilent vermine, who are represented by them? By these are represented all the popish Clergie, their priettes, their swarmes of Monkes, Friers, and Nunnes. For first, all this vermine is not bred from the light, hauing no ground in Gods worde, but indeed from the smoake of the pitte. They are bred of ignorance, of error, and blind superstition, they come from hell. Let any Iesuite shew, where vnder a starre fallen, there is any resemblance of these swarmes of locustes bred of error, of ignorance, and darknes. but onely vnder the popes, in their heapes and rabblements, yea euen swarmes of Friers, Monkes, and such like. Haue not they ouerspread the earth, euen to eat vp and to lay wast all greene things in the Church? And haue not they euen as it were with the poyson of scorpions, stung thousand thousands with their damnable errors and diuelish deuises? who can declare the spirituall miseries of those dayes, when together with the hellish darkenes, through the want of Gods word which lay buried and hid, the venemous locusts did ouerspread, which stung euen as scorpions? Here is againe a doubt to be answered, which is this. When all was thus ouerwhelmed in the darkenes of that smoake, and the earth every where

M 4

crawling

crawling full of these locusts, what became of the Church? this doubt I say might arise. And ye know it is the question which every papist propoundeth, where was your Church an hundred years past? This question is answered in the next words. For as we have seene in every danger prophesied before in this booke, speciall provision made to set the chosen in safetie: so here these locusts are restrained from hurting of them which are sealed. Their power is limited only vpon the reprobate: for we heard before how all the seruants of God were sealed in their foreheads, they are sealed with the holy spirite of promise, which is the spirite of adoption. And here is commandement giuen to the locusts that they shall not hurt the grasle, neither any greene thing, neither any tree, but onely those men which haue not the seale of God in their foreheads. We see then they could not touch the elect of God. Here is the glorious power, the prouidence and wisdom of our Lord Iesus Christ, that in the midst of this darknes, horrible to thinke vpon, euen when Antichrist reigneth in his full pride, his elect among these scorpion locusts flying about their eares like swarmes of hornets, yet not one of them is stung to death: his flocke is defended. Then there is an other commandement giuen to these locusts, which is that they should not kill men, no not euen the reprobate: but that they should bee vexed five moneths, and their paine should be as the paine that cometh of a scorpion when he hath stung a man. This may seeme hard at the first, that they should not kill them: for doth not the darknes, and the venome of these locusts bring vnto destruction vnto mens soules? shall not the kingdome or power of Antichrist slay men with the spirituall death? how then is it sayd they should not kill them? It is to be answered that they should not kil them out right at once, but torment them with a lingring death: and therefore they are compared to scorpions. For it is said, that he which is stung of a scorpion is tormented two or three daies grievously before hee dye of it: hee hath a lingring paine. And vnto that paine of such as lye in torment stung with scorpions, is likened the paine of those which are stung by these locusts. O miserable state of poore blind superstitious papists, which drinke in the poyson of Antichristes doctrine: what a sting doth it leaue behinde? how is their conscience vnquiet? how is it vexed and tormented? no tongue is able to expresse it to the full. They feeble and know that they bee foule sinners, they are sure also that they must come to iudgement. They are tould of the torments of hell by the scriptures, and of the fire of purgatory by the popish sort. The doctrine of free iustification in the blood of Christ is hid from them, yea condemned as heresie: all assurance of Gods fauour, all peace of conscience, all ioye in the holy Ghost are quite destroyed. They are sent to seeke ease in the merite of their owne workes, in popes pardons and indulgences, by running on pilgrimage to this Idoll, and to that Idoll, by punishing their bodies with whippings, fastings, and a thousand inuentions. And when all is done they are not satisfied, they are not eased, but the horror of iudgement, and tortures of conscience still remaine: These scorpion locusts haue stung them. For if any man will doubt of the torments which they suffered in the blind popery that were drowned in superstition, being stung with the false doctrine and idolatrie of these locusts, doe but marke their ende: for when they

they haue run, run, run, euery way to seeke ease, when they haue spent their goods, and tormented their bodies with all the sharpe penances they can: yet at the last what doe they? They giue great gifts, they build Abbeyes to haue trentals of masses, and to be prayed for. Then sing, sing, sing, ring, ring, ring, powre the pardons into the graue: call for the Fryers: call for the poore: let plentifull almes be giuen to helpe the poore soule to some ease from the torments it was in. O filthy cursed locusts, that thrust in such tormenting poyson into the conscience of miserable men! O blessed doctrine of reconciliation through the blood of the Lamb, which bringeth sweete peace and ioye vnto the wounded soule! It is sayd, they should haue this power to torment men five moneths. This is a comfort, yea a great comfort, that albeit the displeasure of God was great for the contempt and abuse of his holy gospel, and therefore as Saint Paul teacheth, 2. Thess. 2. hee would sende strong delusion, euen the darkenes and these vile locusts: yet it should be but for a time, yea lesse then halfe a yeare. I will not stand curiously about the number of yeares, but yet I take it that by these five moneths, after the maner of the speeches of the Prophets, some five hundred yeares are to be vnderstood. For the popery hath bene in the power and sway to bring in this hellish darkenes, about the space of five hundred yeares, as wee shall haue occasion to note elsewhere. But how is it to be taken that he sayth, in those dayes men shall seeke death and shall not find it, & shall desire to dye, but death shall flye from them? This doth shew how fully their torment is like to those which are stung with scorpions: for they lye in grievous paine certaine daies, & would faine be rid of it by death, & death lingereth. Surely the superstitious papists void of al true peace of conscience, tormented with the feeling of their sinnes, and feare of coming to iudgement, in all their seeking for ease do but increase torment. For that which they drink in as a medicine to ease them, is poyson which doth more and more increase paine. No doubt such as be in that case wish to bee dead, so that they might neuer come before the Iudge, and so may be sayd to seeke death. And thus hauing described the torment wherewith these locusts should vex the inhabitants of the earth, in the time of the great Antichrist, he returneth to describe the forme of them. He saith the forme of the locusts was like vnto horses prepared vnto battaile, &c. here wee haue a marueilous description. What is a pield locust to an horse? and yet these locusts are like strong horses prepared to battaile. The popish cleargie, though the inferior sort of them were base in shew like paltrie locusts, yet were strong and linked together with ready and prepared minds, as horses to battel against all such as should any way but so much as nutter against the vsurped power and tyranny of their king the Romish Antichrist. Who knoweth not this which either liueth among them now, or that readeth the histories of the times past? they rush strongly like horses to the battaile. There haue bene great troupes and armies of them, and so bold as to bid battaile against the mightiest Emperors & kings in al Europe. Then next he sayth, they had on their heads as it were crownes of gold: they bee but vile locusts, a deuouring vermine, good for nothing, and yet decked with honour as if they were with crownes of gold vpon their heads. To vnderstand this, looke what deuises

deuises they had to be in dignitie and estimation: looke what priuiledges and immunities they had, as not to be vnder the power of kings: finally, looke what titles of honour and preheminance euery Locust did challenge, and ye must needs confesse that they had crownes vpon their heads like crownes of gold. Indeede it is not sayd that their crownes were of golde, but like gold. For the honour which God hath ordained, and the maiestie which he giueth vnto princes is set forth with crownes of pure gold. But those deuised titles and honours of the Romish Clergie, though they glister, and shew like gold, yet they bee no crownes of gold, they bee no honours to them which know the trueth. Their great Lord himselfe with his triple crowne, whose glorie and magnificence was published and esteemed to excell the maiestie of Emperours, as farre as the Sunne dooth excell the Moone in brightness, is now couered with shame & ignominie, it is no crowne of golde. For who doth not know, that it is no true magnificence ordained by God, but giuen by the Dragon? What is then the crowne of their Monkes and Friars? doe not all men now see it is no gold? In the darke they seemed to be gold, so long as the smoke of the bottomles pit darkened the Sunne: but now the Sunne shineth, and we see the crownes were but like gold.

He sayth further that they had faces like faces of men. They bee not terrible to looke vpon, in as much as they pretend all good, making men beleue that they can bring them vnto true blessednes. For they will teach them true religion, true deuotion, and giue them pardon of all their sinnes. Many things they promise, and make a faire face, that none may bee afrayd of them. They had haire like women: they are delicious and wanton, and full of whorish entisements: their attire and gestures wholly tending to allure vnto spirituall whoredome, and superstition: but their teeth are as the teeth of lions: they haue strong and sharpe teeth. These are strange Locusts, in forme like horses to battaile, that looke like men in their faces, haue haire like women, and teeth like lions. They bee great deuourers, they eate vp all. Looke how they were planted and seated, and see whether they had not gotten the fattest things in the earth which they fedde vpon. Looke vpon the Abbeyes, the Priories, the Nunries, and all religious houses, and iudge what teeth they had. When there was not enough to satisfie them of temporall mens lands, then they prayed vpon Church liuings, and made impropriations. If they had continued, and bred still, and their time of liue moneths not limited, which is now expired; what almost should haue escaped their teeth? The next words doe shewe how strongly they were armed: for he sayth they had habbergions, like to habbergions of yron. How can this agree, may some man say, to the poore popish Priests, Monkes, or Friars, if they be the Locusts? were they armed in any such sort? Yea, they were strongly armed all of them. Their grand captaine the Pope had so terrified and brought vnder all Kings and Emperours, that none durst meddle with the basest of these Locusts: they were exempted from the secular power, and not to bee iudged or corrected by the same. If any King should take vpon him to punish one though neuer so meane of their clergie, for murder, for theft, for whoredome, or for any notorious vice, the Pope as a dreadfull God vpon the earth, would

by and by cast forth his terrible lightning and thunder, euen his excommunication, as against a sacrilegious enimie that would robbe S. Peter. And then the confusion multitude, worshipping the beast, durst not but renounce and denye their Allegiance, and so vlesse those kings would lose their crownes, they must stoope for absolution. Was not this as strong an armour, as to haue habbergions of yron? Thus the Locusts might doe as they lust, and no harme at all done vnto the. If they were coniuers, riotous whoremongers, & most filthie in al wicked & lewd life, as the Monkes and Friars, and Priests were, for the most part, yet was there no punishment to bee layd vpon them by princes. Also their wings make a great noyse: for hee sayth the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots, when many horses runne vnto the battaile. This is not the least matter that they make so horrible a noyse: for it striketh a great terror into mens hearts. True it is that the noyse is confused, as what is al the noyse they haue made or do make to defend and vphold their bloudie kingdome, but a terrible confused and threatening noyse without all reason? The few Locusts which remaine at this day being disturbed make a greyt noyse; how great was it then thinke ye, when all Europe almost was full of the swarmes and troupes of them? Blessed be God which with a mightie East winde hath cast these clamorous Locusts, which made such a noyse with their wings, out of our coasts, and drowned them in the sea. He sayth they had tailes like vnto Scorpions, and they had stings in their tailes. This is to shew their craftie sleight, by which they winde in for to doe hurt, and sting men priuile: their flatteries & faire promises, & goodly smooth words, do shew no such matter that men neede to feare them: but in the end, euen as it were with the taile, they leaue a sting behinde them, euen the poyson of their diuellish doctrine, and false worship, into which they seduce men. At this day, now when the light hath bewrayed them, with what wonderfull cunning doe they winde in themselves, and sting many in all places. They make a shewe of great zeale for the Catholike Church, for the ancient faith, and for the fathers: and the end of all is but to leaue the sting of their taile behind them, that is, their owne corrupt and damnable doctrine: for they are gone quite astray from the ancient Catholike faith of the godly fathers. Doubtles I may speake this, that it was no great marueile, that poore ignorant men in the time when the Sunne and the ayre were darkened, were stung and stung againe: but now in the time of light they are worthie a thousand times to perish which will let them touch them with their taile, to receiue the sting. Touching the time in which power is giuen them to hurt, I haue spoken before. And the last thing is, that they haue a king ouer them which is the Angell of the bottomles pit, which is called *Abaddon* in hebrue, and in greeke *Apollyon*: both the words are of one signification, and that is destroying. Then this great armie is not without a Generall, vnder whom as vnder their Emperour they serue, whose honour, dignitie and power they maintaine. It is the Angell of the bottomles pit: but who is that? whether is it the diuell or the Pope? No doubt properly the diuell is the Angell of the bottomles pit. But the starres are Angels of the Churches: and this starre being fallen hath the key of the bottomles pit committed to him: where

wherefore I doe see no reason why he may not bee called the Angell of the bottomles pit for this respect, that he opened the bottomles pit. These Locusts doe all acknowledge him to be their king indeed, vnder him and for him they do warre. It is also very certaine that the diuell is their king, for he is the king of their king. The Pope destroyeth by the power of Satan, who is indeede the great destroyer. It is a marueilous shame for vs that we are not as earnest to warre vnder our captaine Iesus Christ, as they be for their king, the Angel of hell, the pope & the diuell.



The nineteenth Sermon.

CAP. 9.

- 12 *One woe is past, and behold yet two woes come after this.*
- 13 *Then the sixth Angell blew the trumpet, and I heard a voyce from the foure hornes of the golden altar which is before God,*
- 14 *Saying to the sixth Angell, which had the trumpet, loose the foure Angels which are bound in the great riuer Euphrates.*
- 15 *And the foure Angels were loosed, which were prepared at an houre, at a day, at a moneth, and at a yeare, to slay the third part of men.*
- 16 *And the number of horsemen of warre were twentie thousand times tenne thousand: for I heard the number of them.*
- 17 *And thus I saw the horses in a vision, and them that sate on them, having fierie habbergions, and of lacinth, and of brimstone, and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions: and out of their mouthes went forth fire and smoke, and brimstone.*
- 18 *Of these three was the third part of men killed, that is, of the fire, and of the smoke, and of the brimstone, which came out of their mouthes.*
- 19 *For their power is in their mouthes, and in their tailles: for their tailles were like unto serpents, and had heads wherewith they hurt.*
- 20 *And the remnant of the men which were not killed by these plagues, repented not of the workes of their hands, that they should not worship diuels, and Idols of gold, and of silver, and of brasse, and of stone, and of wood, which neither can see, neither heare, nor goe.*
- 21 *Also they repented not of their murder, and of their sorcery, neither of their fornication, nor of their theft.*

Of the three last woes which the Angell proclaimed, wee haue had one in the former part of this chapter, and that is the darke kingdome of Antichrist, which we passe bricfly ouer, because it is afterwarde set forth largely.

And

And now wee come to the second woe, being the first of the two which yet remaine. It is (as wee shall see) a great armie which in horrible manner slaueth the third part of men. This woe is also vsually expounded of the kingdome of Antichrist, as namely in a further increase. But I doe take it to bee otherwise, being led by these reasons following. First the Angell denouncing woe, woe, woe, denounceth three seuerall woes: and therefore it is sayd, one woe is past, & behold yet two woes come after this. If the kingdome of the Pope should be painted out both by the locustes, and by these horsemen, I see not how they should bee properly called two seuerall woes. The same woe might be augmented, and yet still the same, but this is another, or a seuerall woe from it, and so called the second woe of the three. He that will then expound this second woe to be the tyrannie of the Pope, must not take the former to be a description of the poperie, because as I sayd, they bee two seuerall woes. Secondly, the slaughter of the third part of men is both a slaughter of the wicked, and not of the Saints, and also a bodily slaughter, as may euidently appeare by the latter end of this chapter. For Idolaters that worship diuels are spiritualllyaine already, this slaughter is vpon such vngodly ones, and they that escape the same repent not of their idolatrie. It is a plague, if we consider it well, vpon the idolatrous kingdome of Antichrist: it is a great slaughter made vpon those that worship Idols. The Pope indeede with his armies of scorpion locusts, besides the stinging to death of the soules of the reprobate, slaith the bodies of the Saints; but that is farre another thing from this slaughter. Thirdly, no man of any iudgement, as I suppose, can doubt, that this reuelation reuealing and describing all the greatest calamities and plagues that should come vpon men in the world, should not set forth the kingdome of the Turkes. There are indeede some things which at the first may seeme to make against it: but I take this cleere, to be the description of the great plague of Turcisme. For as I sayd, I am out of doubt, that the kingdome of the Turkes is described in this booke: and if this be not it, let any man shew where we shall finde it. Let vs then come to the words as they lie. When the sixth Angell blew the trumpet, Saint Iohn heard a voyce from the foure hornes of the golden altar which is before God. This propheticke vseth the phrases of the prophets vnder the law, where things were figured by ceremonies. And because the mediation of Christ remaineth fresh and alwayes effectually, there is sayd to be a golden altar before God in heauen, which is the altar of sweet incense. And indeede our altar is in heauen: for whatsoever spirituall sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving we offer, it is vpon the mediation of Christ. From this altar the voyce cometh to the Angell which blew the sixth trumpet, that wee might know it is the voyce and commaundement of our Lord Iesus Christ, it is the voyce of the mightie God. The voyce commaundeth the Angel to loose the foure Angels which are bound in the great riuer Euphrates. These Angels thus bound at Euphrates are diuels. Their binding is no more but a restraint, by which they were held backe from doing that mischief which they desired to doe, and were readie. Their loosing giueth them power to performe that which they wished. Wee may not take it that they were iust foure in number: but because they should raise an horrible plague

plague that should spread East and West, North and South, ouer a great part of the world, they are sayd to bee foure. The sense is, that the diuels haue yet further and greater scope giuen them then before, to plague and destroy the inhabitants of the earth. They had exceeding great power in the kingdome of Antichrist, I meane the diuels, but they are insatiable, and so after a while they are still bound vntill they haue their desire. The place where they lye bound is Euphrates: wherein is a myserie. It is the name of a great riuer which ranne so nigh the citie Babylon in Chaldea, that it was a mightie defence to the citie, so that the citie could not be easily taken, vntill they that layd the siege cut out trenches and deriued the waters another way. This is the letter. Now for the myserie. Rome in this booke is called Babylon mystically, and after the same manner the great riuer Euphrates (as wee shall see after in chap. 16.) signifieth the power and force, which that citie Rome, euen this great Babel hath to defend it selfe. Then in this power of Rome lye the diuels bound. This causeth Interpretors to take this plague also to bee the popish armie. But this one circumstance of the place doth not carrie so great force in it, as to inforce that sense, as we may consider. It is out of doubt that Satan waited through the power of the citie of Rome to worke all mischiefe: and therefore may well be sayd to lie bound there so long as he was restrained. Also from Rome the greatest cause of Turcisme came, seeing it was not onely raised vp to bee the plague of Idolaters: but also the darknes which made way for that error, euen the religion of the Turke, came also from Rome, when the starke euen the Angell of that Church had opened the bottomles pit. I thinke it therefore no hard matter to say the diuels were let loose at Rome which brought the Turcisme: for I thinke they all waited there for their helpe from that citie. Hee sayth these Angels were prepared at an houre, at a day, at a moneth, and at a yeare, to slay the third part of men. This ascending by degrees from a short time vnto longer and longer, I know not what it meaneth, vnles that they bee presently and in short time readie to worke their mischiefe, and as readie also to continue on the same still without wearines: and withall that God doth limit their times. For certaine all these bee most true, they be readie with speede, they be neuer wearie, and God doth limit them. First that the diuels are in a wonderfull readines to worke the destruction of men, if they may be let loose, can any doubt? What a bloudie tyrant is Satan? Secondly, they be neuer satisfied with any time, but would continue: for they be wrath that their kingdome draweth toward an end. And thirdly, (which is our comfort) the Lord God doth set their bounds how farre they shal goe, in plaguing and destroying, and how long. Well they are loosed now, and here followeth presently the description of a terrible plague which they raise. It is a murdering armie, and he beginneth in the description with the number of them. The number is twentie thousand times tenne thousands. Or as some expresse it, which is all one, two thousand times an hundred thousand: or two hundred thousand thousands. One thousand thousands is a great armie, and such as hath been but seldome in the world in comparison: How great is an armie then of two hundred such armies of a thousand thousands put together? I say how huge is an armie which is of two hundred

hundred armies, and euery of them a thousand thousands? But it may bee saide, where shall we find that the Turkes murdering armies haue beene so great? I answer that it is not meant, that this armie was all at a time: here is the full plague of many yeares set forth. Then it may bee objected, that this number cometh short of the number of warriors which haue beene in the armies of the Saracenes and Turkes, if we take the space of fixe or seuen hundred yeares: for in this space of time their whole armies would rise to a greater number then two hundred armies, of a thousand thousands in euery armie. I doe not doubt of that: for it is not the purpose of the holy Ghost to set downe the iust and full number, but by this great and marueilous multitude to lead vs vnto an innumerable companie which should kill and destroy men. How could Saint Iohn number such an armie? or did he stand to number them may some say? Hee answereth this doubt, and saith hee heard the number of them. Hee did not number them, but the number was tolde him.

Then next followeth a description of these warriors, and their horses, a description indeed very full of terror. For thus they appeared in vision: first, the riders had fierie habbergions, and of hyacinth, and of brimstone. Fire is a bitter thing, especially when it is ioyned with brimstone, and with smoake, which doth choake and strangle: for smoake is resembled by the colour of hyacinth. And the horses and their riders therein are alike. For after he hath reported that the heads of the horses were as the heads of lyons: which sheweth their stomacke, strength, and fiercenes: hee addeth, that out of their mouths went forth fire, and smoake, and brimstone. They come with a terrible crueltie and fiercenes. Then followeth the great slaughter, which is that the third part of men were slaine by the fire, the smoake, and the brimstone which came out of their mouths. They are slaine with marueilous barbarous crueltie, either killed with bodily death as multitudes were, or drawn to that wicked religion of Mahomet. For partly by externall violence, and partly by a subtile shew of religion, and deuotion, they destroy: and therefore it is sayd, their power is in their mouths, and in their tails, and that their tails are like serpents, and haue heads wherewith they hurt. These horses may be deuils themselves for ought that I can see, for the deuils haue set the Turkes a worke and doe.

And now that these things may the better appeare, I will briefly note vnto yee the beginning, the proceedings, and the order of the Turcisme. About the yeare of our Lord 591. was Mahomet borne, of base parentage, in a certaine village of Arabia, called Itrax, (for so histories doe report.) This Mahomet by fraud and cousonage grewe into great credite and fame amonge the seditious Arabians, and Egyptians. In the yeare of our Lord 623. he was made captaine and prophet of the Saracenes, and Arabians. It fell out to bee so vpon this occasion. There was an armie of Saracenes, which with Heraclius the Emperour did waite against the Persians. Their wages were denied them, and not onely that, but also reprochfull wordes were giuen: For the treasurers of Heraclius saide, they could hardly giue wages to the Roman and Grecian souldiers, & that they had no money remaining to cast to this rout of dogs (for so they termed the Saracenes) They hearing this

this reproch, in a great rage spoyle all the townes neere about Damascus. They renounce their subiection and obedience to the Romane Emperour, and created Mahomet their captaine. For hee hauing married a very rich wife, had wonne the hearts of many with gifts. This filthy man fayned himselfe to be a Prophet, and said that he had visions & reuelations, and talk with Angels. And so by the help of Sergius a Monk, an Arrian, (who denied the eternal godhead of our blessed Sauour) he framed a new worship and religion patched together out of the old testament, and out of the new which hee deprauid. He raigned in the parts neere Damascus 9. yeares, and so dyed in the yeare of our Lord 631.

Then succeeded this Mahomet in the kingdome of the Saracenes, Ebubezer, he raigned 2. yeares, and tooke Damascus, and made it the head of the kingdome: he wasted Gaza, and Ierusalem. After him succeeded Hauinar, who raigned 12. yeares, and greatly enlarged the kingdome: for subduing a great part of Syria, hee possessed Egypt. In his dayes the Persians craued aide of the Turkes against the Saracenes, but the Persians went by the worse, and then the Turkes entred into league with the Saracenes, and receiued their religion, ioyning their forces also together vnto the warres, and from that time the Saracenes and the Turkes were counted almost for one people. Then was the kingdome farre larger when the Persians were ouercome: for then had they all these regions, Syria, Cilicia, Cappadocia, Mesopotamia, the Iland Cyprus, Egypt, and Ierusalem. In all these parts the religion of Mahomet was set vp: At Babylon was then the seate of the kingdome. They ruled the prouinces by presidents whom they called Souldans: the Souldane of Egypt was the mightiest: hee tooke Caesaria of Palestine, in the yeare of our Lord 642. And in the yeare 654. he possessed the most noble Iland Rhodus, from whence he caried very great riches. The fourth king of the Saracenes was Hoam, vnder whome they inuaded Africa. Muhauias succeeded him, and raigned 24. yeares, vnder whom they inuaded Africa the second time, & caryed away captiues fourescore thousand. In this kingdome of the Saracenes, which helde now the Empire of Asia, and Persia, there succeeded one another to the number of 26. kings, and continued 200. yeares without ciuill discord among themselves. In this space of time the borders of their kingdome, were yet somewhat further enlarged, many fore battailes were fought, great slaughters of Christians, and many caryed captiues. For they tooke the Iland Creta, they entred into Italie, spoyled some townes, and would haue set vpon Rome it selfe, but the citizens of Rome put the to flight. But about the yeare of our Lord 832. the Souldans through emulation and ambition, began to warre and contend among themselves, so that their power diminished, and the power of the Turkes by degrees increased so farre, that in little more then two hundred yeares, besides the regions of Armenia the greater, and the lesse, Cappadocia, Galatia, and Bythinia, which they had gotten, they cast the Emperour of the Saracenes forth of his kingdome, and set vp in his place a king of the Turkes. Their first king was Zadoke, in the yeare of our Lord 1051. In two yeares space hee subdued a great part of Asia. Three of his successors Emperours of the Turkes preuailed, and did great things against the Christians: but after ward there

was

was much adoe to winne from the Turke the holy land. The Pope, and the kings and princes of diuers countries ioynd together, and sent an armie vnder Godfrey of Bullaine, of three hundred thousand footmen, and on hundred thousand horsemen.

In the yeare 1099. Godfrey wan Ierusalem, and was crowned king: there succeeded him five or sixe kings in Ierusalem, which with the losse of much blood kept the holy land, (as they call it) which to maintaine the wars against the Turkes, did ordaine certaine orders, as of Templars, and knights of the Rhodes. Ierusalem was lost againe, with great slaughters of Christians in all parts thereabout, in the yeare 1187. And within short time after that, the Tartari a barbarous people, began to be of power. Their first Emperour was Changius Can. Diuers succeeded, which greatly diminished the dominion of the Turkes, vntill about the yeare of our Lord 1300. for then the Empire of the Tartari was ouerthrowen, and the Empire of the Turkes did flourish more then euer before. Nowe come the greatest monsters, and most sauage and cruellest tyrants of all. Ottoman was the first of them: hee and his successors with most cruell slaughters ouer came the Christians in many countries, and spied the Turkes dominion very farre: but yet in the midst of their glory, there is a great gappe made. Thus it was, Baiazethes the fourth Emperour of the Turkes wonderfully preuailling with great slaughters of Christians, and leading innumerable multitudes captiue out of Hungary which hee inuaded: and setting vpon the Emperour of the Grecians, wasting and destroying with such terror, that the Emperour craued aid, and Charles the sixth king of France, sent a power, and Sigismund king of Hungarie went himselfe with an armie, which were ouerthrowen miserablie, and Sigismund hardly escaped. This was in the yeare of our Lord 1395. Baiazethes in this his glory, being for his terror and quicknes in war called *Hildrin*, that is lightning, proceeded yet forward, and wasted Thracia, Mysia, Dardania, and Macedonia, and to the great terror of all Christiandom, besieged Constantinople. It was supposed the citie would bee taken and vtterly destroyed: but in the meane time (as it is reported) by the request of the Emperour, came Tamerlane the Scythian, with an exceeding great armie against the Turke out of Scythia. Baiazethes was constrained to raise his siege against Constantinople, and to goe and fight with this Tamerlane. It is sayd that the armie of Tamerlane was an hundred myriades, that is, an hundred times ten thousand, or a thousand thousandes. Baiazethes armie was five hundred thousand, that is halfe so much. They fought this battell in the yeare of our Lord 1397. neere to the great riuer Euphrates, which is by Babel in Chaldea. There were slaine about an hundred and fourtie thousand of the Turkes. Euphrates seemed rather to runne with blood then with water. The victorie fell to Tamerlane, who tooke Baiazethes the great Turke and put him into an Iron cage, and caried him about in shew through Asia, he trode vpon his backe, as vpon a stoole when hee went to horsebacke: he made him also gather vp scrappes vnder the table like a dog. Hee caused the Emperesse the wife of Baiazethes, to bee clothed in a short garment which did scarce couer her shame, and so to waite and fill the cuppes to the nobles of Scythia, in the

N

fight

fight of her husband. The Turke tooke this so heauily, that hee beate his head against the Iton grate of his cage and so killed himselfe. Thus was Constantinople for that time, and all Grecia freed from the most sauage tyrannie of the Turke. And then that horrible kingdome might seeme euen as good as pulled down: but God had in his iustice determined the plague for the wickednes of those which professed his Sonne in worde, and liued in so foule idolatrie. Tamerlane thus preuailed, who though he shewed this fauour and compassion to the Emperor of Grecia, yet was hee one of the most cruell tyrants that euer liued. Hee was a poore mans sonne, and became a captaine among robbers, and grewe so strong that hee found the meanes vpon occasion to become the king of the Persians. If hee besieged a citie, the first day he set vp white tents: to shew that if they would yeeld they should haue mercie. The second day he set vp red tents, by which hee threatened death. The third day he set vp blacke tents, in token of extreme calamitie: and after these were vp, no yeelding could be accepted, but they must all die, both great and small. And therefore besieging a citie which yeelded not at the first, nor the second day, but stood the setting vp his blacke tents, the citizens fearing his cruelty, sent forth all their little children, their sonnes and their daughters clothed in white, and palmes in their handes, thinking by the innocencie of these poore infants to mitigate the crueltie of the tyrant: but he sent his horsemen vpon them, and trode them downe most cruelly. One demaunded of him why he was so cruel towards all? And it is sayd, that hee with a frowning sterne countenance looking awrie, made this answer: thinkest thou that I am a man, and not rather the wrath of god dealing vpon the earth to the destruction of men. The king of Hungarie thought it a fit time after this great victorie of Tamerlane, to set vpon the sonne of Baiazethes, & vtterly to root out the name of Ottoman, not only out of Europe, but also out of Asia. But he tooke the foile, and Calpine the Turke preuailed: and after the death of Tamerlane, Mahomet recouered againe all that his Grandfather Baiazethes had lost, and dyed in the yeere 1419. And from that time the kingdome grew more larger, and more terrible then euer before, for the wrath of God was kindled against the wickednes of the Christians. For Amurathes, who came next to bee Emperour of the Turkes, subdued many places to the great destruction of the Christians. He was indeed strongly resisted in Hungarie, and by Ladislaus king of Polonia. This Ladislaus, & the Turke, concluded a peace fourteene yeares with a solemne oath. But Pope Innocent, and Iulian the Cardinall with wicked counsell perswaded Ladislaus to breake his oath, affirming that hee might lawfully doe it to an enemy of Christ. Ladislaus gathered his power, and there ioyned with him the power of the pope, and of the Duke of Burgundie, and of Venice. Hee thought to intercept the Turke suspecting no such matter, because of the peace concluded betwene them by oath. But the Turke sence the matter, and with wonderfull speed came to Verna, where Ladislaus was, not looking for him. There was a most famous battell fought: It continued three daies and three nights without any apparance which side should preuaile. The fields seemed to stand with pooles of blood: At length the Turke preuailed to the great slaughter of the Christians.

Ladislaus

Ladislaus the king was slaine, and so was the wicked Cardinall Iulian, which perswaded him to breake and violate his league and solemne oath. This battell was fought in the yeare of our Lord 1444. After this the Turke did marueilously rage against Hungarie, then against Grecia, and other places. At this time Scanderbege the sonne of a Christian prince which was overcome by the Turke, and so his foure sonnes caryed away, among whome this Scanderbege was one, being a man of wonderfull valoure (for therefore the Turke called him not by his owne name which was George, but Scanderbege, that is, Alexander the great) reuolted from the Turke, recouered his fathers possession, and was a great plague to that sauage kingdome. But yet the Lorde God which was wrath for the wickednes of men, would haue it further preuaile.

For now followeth an other Mahomet a most cruell tyrant, which meant to subdue the whole world, and indeed exceeded all his predecessors in power. For he besieged and wan Constantinople, and so did ouerthrowe and put an ende to the Empire of the East. He wan it in the yeare 1453. and there hath euer since bene the royall pallace of the Turke. The winning of this citie, and the ouerthrow of that Empire of the Grecians, was a manifest token of Gods heauie wrath, and did strike such a terror into all Christiandome, that many yeelded themselves to the Turke, and many regions and cities he overcame by violent warres. If I should stand now to recite the horrible slaughters of Christians, and the innumerable multitudes which the Turkes haue led into captiuitie, I should bee more then tedious. I suppose that by the Saracenes, the Turks, the Tartarians, and Scythians, the third part of men haue bin horribly slaine: As it is said by S. Iohn, that the third part of men were slaine. Many did cōfesse that these plagues came vpon the for sin, euen y the worde of God was despised, & that al foule vices did abound amōg y prelates: but yet there was no amendment of life, no repentance, but al grew worse & worse. For marke what Saint Iohn sayth: and the remnant of the men which were not killed by these plagues, repented not of the workes of their handes, that they should not worship deuils, and Idols of golde, and of siluer, and of brasse, and of stone, and of wood, which neither heare nor goe. Also they repented not of their murther, and of their forcerie, neither of their fornication, nor of their theft. If wee looke through all Europe, so farre as the Pope bare sway, yee shall finde that euen to the very time that the light of the gospell brake forth againe, the more the Turke with sauage cruelty and tyrannie, did lead into captiuitie infinite multitudes, so that there was a terrour stricken into al mens harts, that as he had subdued al the East churches, so he would also ouerrunne all the West Churches, yet horrible idolatrie increased, and other wickednes dayly more and more. How were the people befotted? how did they runne from Idoll to Idoll, which were but of gold, or siluer, or brasse, or stone, or wood, and had no sense to heare, to see, or to goe? The truth is, they worship deuils which worship not the Lord as Saint Iohn here speaketh. And none worship the Lord which worship Idols. Likewise what cruell murders did they commit, especially vpon the true seruants of Christ? The Monks, the Fryers, the priests, the Nunnes, how full of charmes, sorceries, witchcrafts, and coniurations were they,

with innumerable whoredomes, murthers and thefts? The common people, yea all sorts did follow them. What should I here stand to enter into particular demonstrations, when all that be of yeares can testifie, vnles it be such as be wilfully blinded, how all agreed to that which S. Iohn here setteth downe? And now let the most slie and subtil of all the Iesuites which warre for Antichrist, shewe vs where they be in al the world that haue been plagued with this terrible armie, sent in Gods wrath for worshipping of Idols, and the other vices here named, but only in the poperie? If they will leade vs vnto more ancient times: they may not, for this is in the opening of the seuenth seale of the booke, and in the blowing of the sixt trumpet, and therefore in the latter end of the world, seeing the day of Iudgement commeth when the seuenth Angel bloweth the trumpet. If they would turne vs ouerto the heathen Nations, the West or East Indians: indeede the West Indians haue been slaine in such multitudes, as it is almost incredible: but then the popish Spanyards haue been this murdering armie, for they haue killed them. But alas who cannot see that this prophecie is chiefly fulfilled vpon those Nations which professe Christ? Poore and miserable is the shift of our Rhemists vpon this place, which say here are meant the portraictures of the heathen gods: seeing they be gone long since: and this is spoken of the latter end of the world, in which none worship Idols of gold, siluer, &c. but the papists. Blessed bee the Lord who by the light of the Gospell hath deliuered from worshipping dumbe Idols, and so from the feare of this horrible armie. For where men haue imbraced the Gospel, and repented of their abominable Idolatrie, they haue no feare of him any longer.



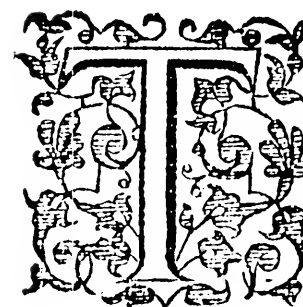
The twentieth Sermon.

CHAP. 10.

- 1 And I saw another mightie Angell come downe from heauen clothed with a clowd, and the rainebow vpon his head, and his face was as the Sunne, and his feete as pillars of fire.
- 2 And he had in his hand a little booke open, and he put his right foote vpon the sea, and his left foote vpon the earth.
- 3 And cried with a lowd voyce, as when a lion roreth: and when he had cried, seuen thunders vttered their voyces.
- 4 And when the seuen thunders had vttered their voices, I was about to write: but I heard a voyce from heauen saying vnto me, Seale vp those things which the seuen thunders haue spoken, and write them not.
- 5 And the Angell which I saw stand vpon the sea, and vpon the earth, lift up his hand to heauen:

6 And

- 6 And sware by him which lieth for euermore, which created heauen, and the things that therein be, and the earth, and the things that therein be, and the sea, and the things that therein be, that time should be no more,
- 7 But in the dayes of the voyce of the seuenth Angell, when he shall begin to blow the trumpet, euen the mysterie of God shall be finished, as he hath declared to his seruants the Prophets.
- 8 And the voyce which I heard from heauen, spake vnto me againe, and sayd, Goe take the little booke which is open in the hand of the Angel, which standeth vpon the sea, and vpon the earth.
- 9 So I went to the Angell, and sayd vnto him, Giue me the little booke. And he sayd vnto me, Take it, and eate it vp, and it shall make thy belly biter, but it shall be in thy mouth as sweete as honey.
- 10 Then I tooke the little booke out of the Angels hand, and eate it vp, and it was in my mouth sweete as honey: but when I had eaten it my belly was bitter.
- 11 And he sayd vnto me, Thou must prophesie againe among the people, and nations, and tongues, and to many kings.



His vision is ioyfull: for after the dark kingdome of Antichrist, & that horrible murdering armie of the Turks, a mightie Angell commeth downe from heauen to relieue the poore Church, and to be auenged of those cruel enemies. The Lord preserued a remnant in the middelt of those plagues, euen when the smoke of the bottomles pit did darken the Sunne and the ayre, when those scorpion locusts did sting and torment men, and when that horrible armie whose horses had heads like lions, & fire, smoke and brimstone comming out of their mouthes, and destroying the third part of men: but now he sendeth forth the Gospell againe, dispelling the darknes and errors which came by the smoke of the pit, scattering and destroying the stinging locusts, reforming his Church, and gathering great multitudes of his Saints together. This vision is fulfilled, or at the least begun to bee fulfilled in our dayes: for we liue vnder the opening of the seuenth seale, and vnder the sounding of the sixt trumpet, as it doth euidently appeare by this chapter. I will come to the text as it lieth. The mightie Angell which commeth downe from heauen is the Lord Iesus, Christ himselfe: for the things which are here attributed vnto him, and by which he is described, bee such as belong to none other but to the diuine maiestic. For that he is clothed with a clowd, it is a note of Christs peculiar glorie. The rainebow about his head (which of olde time was the sacrament betwene the Lord and all flesh, that he would not any more drowne the whole earth) is no lesse. This rainebow also doth testifie, that albeit he bee come downe with great wrath and terror against his enemies, euen as the God of vengeance, yet full of mercie to his faithfull seruants. That his face doth shine as the Sunne, it is to the

N 3

comfort

comfort and deliuerance of his Church, euen to dispell all that smoke of the bottomles pit, as we see the Sunne scattereth and driueth away the thicke mists. And as the stinging locusts were bred of the smoke, so now the brightnes of his countenance doth scatter and destroy them, as vermine which cannot indure the light. The swarmes of them were exceeding great, and like most terrible locusts they did craule in abundance, and spread themselues ouer the face of the earth: but now their nests be destroyed, and they are become very few in comparison of that they were, and withall they be greatly distressed which remaine yet behind. The bright shining countenance of this Angell causeth them to appeare most vile and base, not onely to those which embrace the truth, but also to the very subiects of Antichrist. Their glorie is defaced, their shame is layd open, and their strength decayed. His secte are as pillers of fire: This is set downe for the terror of his enemies, whom he will tread downe vnder his feete, & consume them with the fire of his wrath. Before he commeth the locusts are of wonderful power, Antichrist held all the Kings in Europe in awe, and exercised tyrannie at his pleasure, the Turke was terrible: but what are they vnto this mightie and glorious Angell? what is their power to withstand him? Then further it is sayd, that hee had in his hand a little booke open. This booke is the booke of the holy Scriptures: for as we see, the Bible is a large booke, if we consider it by it selfe, but yet in comparison of the huge volumes of the ordinances and decrees in the popish Church, it is but a little booke. The booke in the hand of him that sate vpon the throne was shut and sealed with seuen seales, that no man could looke vpon it: but this booke is open, to signifie that it is to bee looked vpon of all men, and openly taught vnto all the seruants of God. It was shut vp in the poperie, and lay buried in a strange tongue: no man taught it, which embraced the Romish religion, but in steed thereof mens decrees and inuentions, and all lyes and fables were preached by the popish clergie, and beleued of the people. The laitie (as they call them) were in no wise to meddle with it. Fourscore yeares past, ye should not see it in the hands of any: now it is open in the hands of thousand thousands, and tenne thousand thousands of Gods people, which out of it doe learne to know God, and to worship him aright in spirit and in truth. It hath brought such light euery where, that the scorpion locusts cannot deuoure vp the Greene things of the earth, nor sling men any longer in such multitudes as they did. It was sayd before, when the third part of men were slaine by the fire, by the smoke, and by the brimstone that came out of the horses mouthes, that the remnant of the men which were not killed of those plagues, repented not of the workes of their hands, that they should not worship diuels, and Idols of gold, &c. and the same kingdome and tyrannie of the Turke being sent of God in his wrath to plague Idolaters, as Idolatrie increased, so it also increased: for the more the Lord plagued the world by the Turke, the more Idolatrie increased, and they were further and further from repentance: so that euen vpon the time that the Gospell began to peepe forth, darknes was growne euen to the full, Idolatrie was exceeding grosse, and the Turkes power did so increase, that he was a terror vnto all Christendome, & it was feared that as he had throwne

downe

downe the Empire of the East, and ouerrunne all those Churches, so hee would throw downe the Romane Empire, and spread himselfe ouer all the Churches in Europe. For as a terrible fire dooth hang in the ayre, and men looke with feare when it should fall vpon them: so did hee seeme to hang ouer all. But when this mightie Angell had brought this little booke open from heauen, and that men did looke vpon it, and repent of their Idolatrie, and turne to the liuing God, the plague hath departed euer since, and the Turke hath not been feared in these parts where the Gospell is preached: but God hath drawne his power another way, and set him a worke elsewhere. So that if men cannot be brought to beleue, that God raised him vp as a scourge and plague for Idolatrie, and other foule sinnes in the Church, according to the words of the former chapter, when he sayth they repented not of the workes of their hands, &c. yet when they see that at the opening of the booke of God, and forsaking Idolatrie, the feare of him is removed. let them beleue it. What can we haue more plaine, then that this open booke in the hand of the Angell, hath deliuered vs both from the Pope and from the Turke? a most happie opening of this blessed booke.

Then it is sayd further, that he put his right foote vpon the sea, and his left foote vpon the earth. This sheweth that he is Lord and ruler both ouer sea and land: for he treadeth vpon both, and standeth as stedfast and as firme vpon the sea, as vpon the fast earth. He cried also with a lowd voyce, as when a lion roreth. This is to manifest and to declare his wrath against his enemies, euen agaynst the locustes, and the horsemen of warre, and their horses. He let them range for a time at their pleasure, but now they shall feelee his hand, and the power of his mightie & terrible voyce. If the lion rore, the beasts of the Forrest tremble. The Lord hath vttered his voyce againe in earth, and hath scattered his foes, he will in the ende make them tremble. And when he had cried, (sayth S. Iohn) seuen thunders vttered their voyces. It is not expessed what hee vttered in his strong and mightie voyce, with which he cryed as when a lion roreth: but it appeareth evidently that it was concerning the terrible vengeance and seuer iudgements to bee executed vpon the destroyers and oppressors of his Church. For that which seuen Angels doe utter at his call, is vttered as if seuen thunders should utter their voyces. Thunder is a most terrible thing, and for that cause the most fearefull iudgements of God against the aduersaries are vttered by the voyces of thunders. He will thunder vpon them in his wrath, and horror shall oppress them. The number of seuen, is a perfect number in the Scripture: for the Lord made all things in fixe dayes, and rested the seuenth day: and therefore to denounce the fulnes of all his iudgements, here are seuen thunders utter their voyces. These thunders did speake so as they might be vnderstood: for S. Iohn was about to write the things which they spake: he tooke it they were vttered for that end and purpose, that he should deliuer them in writing to the Churches: but he receiueth a commandement to the contrarie. He is willed not to write, but to seale vp the things which the thunders had spoken. Why then were they vttered? or was it not in vaine, seeing they bee concealed? It was not in vaine: for first, though the particulars bee not expessed what

the thunders spake, yet here we are taught, that there remaine most feareful iudgements for Gods enemies, which hee hath thundred out with terrour against them. And then moreouer, when the time commeth they shall be seene and vnderstood, for they be sealed vp vntill that time: As we see the Angell spake to Dauiel, These things are sealed vp vntill the time determined, chap. 12. vers. 9. Let vs then fully assure our selues that there is great wrath and vengeance of the Lord to be powred forth vpon the papists, and vpon the Turkes, and vpon all such enemies of the truth, for all their crueltie shewed towardes his poore seruants. Their wickednes hath beene and is exceeding great many waies, both against Gods trueth, and against his people: and no maruell though the Lord denounceth his wrath and vengeance against them for the same by seuen terrible thunders. Who shall bee able to stand whē this commeth, euen when the great God shall thunder against them from heauen? Let the pope make merie, with all his stinging locustes which yet remaine, yea with all such as fauour and take his part: this is their lot, and ye see what cheere is prepared for them: most horrible vengeance shall light vpon them.

The next part of this chapter setteth forth, how the Angell with a solempne oath, euē by the liuing God which created all things, affirmeth y^e the great day of God, the day of y^e general iudgmēt is at hād. This is for our instruction chiefly, which liue in this last age of the world: that we may be warned that the last day is at hand. The booke in the right hande of him that sat vpon the throne, was sealed with seuen scales, which the Lambe hath opened: vnder the seauenth scale commeth this great day. This seuenth scale is opened and as it were deuided into seuen parts, at the sounding of seuen trumpets: fixe of these trumpets are sounded already. Yea it is euident that the sixt trumpet was sounded long since: because it draweth well towardes fourescore yeares since this Angell came downe from heauen with the little booke open in his hand, and that the light of the Gospell began to peepe out, and to disclose the foulness of poperie. For in the yeare of our Lord 1516 or in the yeare 1517. Martin Luther began to call some matters into question touching the poperie.

There remained but the last trumpet to bee sounded when the Angel made this solempne protestation, and a good part of the time since is expired. It is therefore as I sayd, euen to warne vs that liue now in these dayes, and haue seene all these things fulfilled, to be prepared, and to waite for the second coming of Christ. But let vs looke vpon euery part and circumstance in this oath, as the words of the text doe leade vs. The Angell (saith Iohn) which I saw stand vpon the sea, and vpon the earth, lift vp his hand to heauen. It is a cleere case, that in olde time, they that sware, did lift vp their hand to heauen, thereby testifying as by an outward ceremonie or gesture, that they called the God of heauen to witnes. And therefore Abraham when he would haue the king of Sodome vnderstand that hee had sworne by the most high God, that he would not take any thing that was his, when hee had brought backe the captiues, vseth but this speech: I haue lift vp mine hande to Iehouah the God most high, possessor of heauen and earth, Gen. 14. 22. Then is it expressed, that this Angell sware by him that liueth for euermore, &c. The liuing god
alone

alone is to haue this honour, that we sweare by his name in truth: and so the Angell sweareth by him and by none other. I will not stand here to confute the Anabaptists, which because of these words of our Saniour, Sweare not at all: doe holde it vnlawfull now vnder the new testament to take an oath: wee see here the Angell sweareth. But if any shall thinke how it can be, if this Angell bee Christ, and so the liuing God, that he should sweare by the liuing God? the matter is easily answered. Christ in the person of the mediatur is both God and man. And againe the scripture sayth, When there was no greater to sweare by, the Lorde swore by himselfe. He saith not the creator of all things, or the creator of heauen and earth: which is as much in effect as he speaketh, and doth teach vs, that he hath the ordering of all things, and hath in his owne counsell decreed the time when the world shall haue an end: but which created the heauen, and the things which be therein, & the earth, and the things which therein bee, and the sea, and the things which therein be, &c. Here wee see the whole world is deuided into three parts: the heauens, the earth, and the sea with their furniture. Euery one of these is very great and furnished with marueilous creatures: and when we looke vpon them seuerally, it may leade vs into a greater wonderment at his glorie. And that is one cause no doubt why he doth speake of them euery one, as it were apart. Wee are negligent in considering the creatures to see how they set forth the magnificence of their creator. The Lord no doubt coulde haue created all thinges at one instant: but hee made them in fixe dayes, and so we haue them distinguished, to the end we might be moued and led vnto deeper consideration.

And now followeth what he sware, and that is, time shall be no more, but in the daies of the voice of the seuenth Angell, when hee shall beginne to blow the trumpet, euen the mysterie of God shall be fulfilled, as hee hath declared to his seruants the prophets. The time that shall be no more, is the time as it is now, for the state of thinges as they bee: and that there shall be no more delay or deferring of matters, but all shall be brought to iudgement. For now wee see commonly good matters troden downe, and euill causes maintained, and no redresse to bee had: but then there shall be no more delay, but euery thing righted that is amisse. And this the Angell sweareth shall be euen when the seuenth Angell beginneth to blowe the trumpet. But why doth the Angell take such a solempne oath that the day of iudgement shall shortly come? The cause is euident: we see how men in these last daies are drowned in worldly cares and pleasures, euen with as much greedines, as if the world were new begunne, and should last for euer. Our Saniour telleth how they shall eate and drinke, marrie wines, plant, build, &c. and how the day shall come vpon the vnawares euen as a snare. The things be lawfull in themselves, & that causeth the more danger: for many thinke so long as they be about lawfull and honest things, though they bee euen drowned and overwhelmed in them, and expell all care and delight in heauenly matters, that they cannot bee blamed. Yea euen the faithfull need to be stirred vp: for the wise virgins doe slumber and sleepe. We haue warning giuen vs in many places of the scripture: but this warning, if we bee not vntillie as dead flesh, may touch and moue vs, euen to prepare our selues with our
leynes

loynes girded, and our Lampes burning, to waite for the comming of our master.

But what is this that he saith, euen the myserie of God shalbe finished? It is the rewarding of the iust, and the punishing of the wicked. The word of God, not onely the writings of the Apostles, but also of the Prophets, doth plainly set forth and testifie both: that is to say, what glory God will bestowe vpon all such as be faithfull and true vnto him, which loue, obeye, and serue him: and on the other side, what terrible wrath shall be powred forth in full measure vpon all vngodly sinners, and yet they be still a myserie. For the greater part thinke little of any such matter, and the faithfull which beleue it, come farre short of comprehending it as it shalbe. For the high glory of God shalbe exceedingly magnified both in the saluation of the iust, & in the destruction of the wicked, which we can not now fully comprehend. Let vs thinke of it, and long for it, and bee assured we shall then see the greatest and the most wonderfull sights that euer haue beene scene. And aboue all, let vs labour that the myserie of God may be finished vnto our ioye and comfort. Nowe is the time, beware yee bee not of those that shall bee made vessels of wrath.

Now al that remaineth to the end of this chapter, is concerning the little booke which the Angell brought down open from heauen in his hand. First, Iohn is commanded by the voyce which spake to him from heauen, to go take the little booke which is in the hand of the Angell standing vpon the sea, and vpon the land. Saint Iohn obeyeth that commandement of the heauenly voyce, and goeth to the Angell requiring of him that he would giue him the booke. The Angell doth not onely deliuer it to him, but withall commandeth him to eate it vp: and he telleth him he should finde the taste thereof sweete in his mouth as honey, and bitter in his belly. Which he found so indeede: for he tooke the booke and did eate it, and it was sweete in his mouth, but when he had eaten it, his bellie was bitter. What this doth signifie, the Angell doth tell him in these words, that hee must prophesie againe among the people, and nations, and tongues, and to many kings. It is for great purpose that this booke is brought, and for that respect here is much sayd of it. It is as I haue noted before, to declare that after the darknes of the poperie, in which the holy Scriptures lay buried, and mens inuentions and lyes were taught, now towards the latter end of the world, the Gospell should be preached agayne. For ye see there remaine no trumpets now to be sounded but the last: there is but the last woe to come. Iohn then in taking the booke, eating it vp, and prophesying vnto kindreds, tongues, people, and many kings: representeth not the Ministers of old in the ages past, but the Ministers of our time, which shall preach the truth for the throwing downe of Antichrist. Then let vs examine euery parcell. There is first a voyce from heauen, willing them to take the booke at the hand of Christ. The Ministers are called of God, and by him they are set on worke: otherwise there could be no power, no authoritie, nor no good successe in their ministrie. Againe, see how the voyce from heauen sendeth them vnto that little booke: for therein lyeth all the power and authoritie. And doe wee not see this fulfilled?

Did

Did not Luther, and all the rest of those noble instruments that God raised vp to recover his Church from vnder the tyrannie of Antichrist, euen by the direction of the holy Ghost, as by a voyce from heauen, leaue all humane deuises, and flye to the holy Scriptures for triall of all matters? And haue we not found, that so soone as euer the Lord sendeth his ministers to take this booke, then beginneth the work against Antichrist? Doth it not wound them so deeply? Doth it not so discouer all their trecheries and abominations, that they will not abide to bee tried by it? They say there is no certaintie in the Scriptures to decide controuersies. They say the Scriptures be not sufficient for all matters. Yea which is most wicked, they set themselves about the Scriptures, affirming that the Scriptures haue no authoritie in respect of men, but that which dependeth vpon their Church. Thus Antichrist and his ministers set themselves aloft aboue all, and will be tried by nothing but by their owne decrees, that is, by themselves: for this is their bulwarke, that their Church cannot erre: the Pope in his chaire iudicially cannot erre. But they come downe, and let vs in no wise be driuen from this little booke which is deliuered vnto vs by the Angell.

Then next the Ministers of Christ are to eate vp the booke: that is, they must be so painefull in the studie of it, so learne it, and know all pointes of doctrine and instructions in it, and haue the power thereof in their heart, euen as if they had eate vp the whole booke. All their studies in other bookes must bee but helps to bring them to the knowledge of this booke. How sweete is it in the mouth, what ioy and delight, the finding out, and knowledge of the true doctrine bringeth to a man while he is in the studie thereof, all godly students doe knowe. Howe bitter is it in the bellie, what indignation and griefe it worketh when it is known and digested, to see it despised, to see error, falshood, and abominable wickednes exalted and magnified, all godly zealous men doe feelee? Who is a right student in the holy scriptures, which feeleth not that booke as sweete as honie in his mouth, and bitter in his bellie? If this bitterness in the bellie were not, men would keepe it still within them: but they as the Angell sayth, must prophesie: againe, they must out with it among the nations and people. They must instruct in doctrine, they must conuince, reprove, and exhort. The sweetness that a man feeleth in the doctrine, doth not carrie him sufficiently to doe all this: but the bitterness which hee feeleth, the indignation that falshood should beare sway, the griefe to see the desolations of the church, and the burning zeale for Christs glorie, do thrust him forward. What is a minister of the gospel, if he seeme to haue eat vp the whole book of God, and it make not his bellie bitter? Look vpon those worthy men which receiued the booke at the hands of the Angell, at the first disclosing and bewraying of poperie: some in Germany, some in France, some in England, some in other countries. But especially looke vpon Luther, Caluine, Peter Martir, Bucer, bullinger, and Beza: and ye shall see that as they euen eate vp the booke of God, and became very mightie in the holy scriptures, feeling such wonderfull sweetness therein: so also they were caried with a wonderfull zeale and indignation against the wicked doctrine of Antichrist, their bellies were made so bitter, that they prophesied, and through their prophesying.

eying, the light of the truth hath spread it selfe among nations, tongues, and people, and kings haue imbraced and maintained it. Praised be the Lord, blessed bee his holy name for this great worke which he hath wrought in our dayes. When ye see al things fall so fully out according to this vision, let vs be bold in the truth, and magnifie this little booke which will vtterlie destroy poperie, and bring downe the proud Antichrist, do all which fight for him what they can.



The 21. Sermon.

CHAP. II.

1. *And there was giuen me a reed like vnto a rod, and the Angell stood by, saying, arise and measure the temple of God and the Altar, and them that worship therein.*
2. *But the court which is without the Temple, cast forth and measure it not: for it is giuen vnto the Gentiles, and the holy citie shall they tread vnder foote, fourtie and two moneths.*
3. *But I will giue power vnto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesie a thousand, two hundred, and threescore daies clothed in sackcloth.*



IN the latter ende of the former chapter, Saint Iohn representing the ministers of the gospel, whom the Lord would raise vp in the latter end of the worlde, to recouer his Church from vnder the tyrannie of Antichrist, taketh the little booke of God which was open in the hand of the Angell, and eateth it vp, and it was sweete in the eating, but bitter in his bellie, because hee must prophesie againe among people, and nations, and tongues, and to many kings. The gospell of the kingdom (as our Sauour saith, Mat. 24. vers. 14.) shall be preached in the whole world, (which is begunne to be accomplished in our daies) and then shall the end be. In this chapter here is first set forth the effect of this prophesying againe in the latter dayes: as namely, the restoring, reforming, and building vp of the Church, which was so oppressed and wasted by the great Antichrist: and then by occasion thereof in the second place, here is the historie of the builders, that is, of the faithfull ministers of the Gospell, not onely of those which in these last times should take and eate vp the little booke, and restore the Churches, but also of those which were raised vp, and withstood Antichrist all the time of his raigne, euen when his power was at the greatest, and when hee did chiefly flourish. This historie containeth

diuers

diuers worthy things, and profitable to be knowen. The first point, that is the restoring, the repairing, and building vp of the church, is resembled by the measuring of the temple of God. For he saith, there was giuen him a reed like vnto a rod, and he was willed to arise and to measure the temple of God, and the Altar, and them that worship therein: for ye may see in Ezechiel, chap. 40. that by measuring is signified the restoring of the Church. The Church of Israel was afflicted, and led into captiuitie by the king of Babel, and seemed to be ouerthrowen. But the Lord dooth comfort the faithful with the promise of restauration by Christ, and figureth out the same by measuring. For there Christ hath a reede to measure with, of sixe cubites, and measureth all parts about the temple, and in the temple. And from thence is this figure taken, that Iohn in the person of all the ministers hath a measuring reed giuen him, and is willed to measure. Wee all doe knowe that men doe not measure to throw downe and to destroy any building, but to repaire and to build vp. Thus much touching the measuring.

Now for the things which he is commanded to measure: that is, the temple, the Altar, and them that worship therein. This prophesie setteth forth spiritual things by the same figures vnder which they were represented in the time of the lawe: and therefore by the temple and the altar, and they that worship, are signified the pure and spirituall worship of God, and all the true worshippers. These were oppressed, troden downe, and defaced by Antichrist, and now are measured to be repaired and built vp.

Then followeth an other commaundement giuen vnto Iohn, which is in these words: *But the court which is without the Temple, cast out and measure it not: for it is giuen to the Gentiles, and the holy citie shall they tread vnder foote, two and fourtie moneths.* What is the meaning of this? I will shew ye. The visible church, and such as will beare the name of the Church, hath great heapes in it of false Christians. There be sundry sorts of heretikes, there bee hypocrites, there bee Idolaters, and corrupters of the true worship, as all the swarmes of papists. These shall all be cut off from the true temple of God, euen from the fellowship of the liuely members of Christ, being but as hangers on, resembled by the court without the temple, and shall not bee measured. The Lorde God will builde vp and saue his true Church, and yet cast them forth. Then let vs marke further, that the court without the temple, is not onely allotted vnto those which are hangers on, and in wordes profess Christ, but yet for their prophanenes are called Gentiles, but also that these same which possesse the same court are they which tread vnder foote the holy citie, two and fortie moneths. The false hearted hypocrites, the wicked heretikes, and idolatrous sects of Antichrist, are they which tread downe the trueth and the true seruants of God. The Church, called the holy citie, was indeed grievously persecuted almost for the space of three hundred yeares at times, by the heathen Emperours: they are here after a sort included, but properly and peculiarly these Gentiles that possesse the court without the temple, are the false Christians the heretikes, and those which are vnder Antichrist: these doe defile, lay waste, and tread vnder foote most grievously, the pure worship, and the true worshippers. The Gentiles which

which vtterly renounced Christ, can not in so full a manner be sayd to be the vtter court of the temple of God, for they be further remoued. Then note how it was in the temple: first, there was the most holy place into which the high priest alone entred once in the yeare. Then was there the holy place into which the priests did enter at all times. Thirdly, there was the court into which all the people might and did come to worship. This last, that is the court where all the people were, was the largest roome, and had farre the greatest multitude in it. Let vs see then how it is to be taken.

Through Iesus Christ all the elect are made holy priests to God, and doe not remaine in the vtter court of the temple, as the figure was vnder the lawe, but haue an entrance into the most holy place, as we are taught, Heb. 4. ver. 16. and 10. ver. 19. 20. And then on the other side, so many as professe Christ and yet are not sanctified, they are called Gentiles, for they bee still prophane: the court without is giuen to them: they worship, but haue no accessse into the most holy place, and so shal be cast forth, and shall not be measured with the true worshippers. These are they which indeede proudly challenge the name of the Catholike Church, because they are by many degrees the greatest multitude. These take vpon them authoritie to frame a worship of God: these doe tread downe the holy word of God as much as in them lyeth, and murther the true worshippers. Let all the heretikes and idolatrous papistes then boast and glorie of their multitudes, that they be catholike, and despise the true worshippers, because they bee so fewe. Let them proudly lift vp and aduance themselves, because they professe Christ in worde, and challenge authoritie to do euē what they lust. We see the holy Scripture is plaine against the, their multitude shall not excuse, they shal bee cut off, and not measured and built vp with the true temple, which are the holy worshippers of God. Then next here is shewed how long the great Antichrist, and his rout of prophane Gentiles, possessing the vtter court of the temple, shall tread downe the holy citie. The time is set to be two and fourtie monethes: and that is, three yeares and an halfe: for twelue monethes to a yeare, three times twelue is thirtie and sixe, and then sixe monethes for the halfe yeare, doe make vp two and fourtie. From this place the papistes doe draw one argument, by which they would prooue that the pope is not Antichrist. After this maner they reason: The pope hath gouerned the Church many yeares. The great Antichrist shal raigne but two and fortie moneths, which is three yeeres and an halfe: (for they doe rightly confesse that the Gentiles which possesse the vtter court of the temple, are the rout of Antichrist) therefore say they it is impossible that the pope should be Antichrist. For answere vnto this: let it first be demanded, doth not Saint Iohn in this prophecie speake mystically, euen as the prophets did in old time? they can not deny this. And then demand further, is not euery day put for a yeare in the sequentie weekes which Daniel the prophet speaketh of? and so euery weeke is seven yeares. And why may not euery moneth here then be put for 30 yeares? which then do amount vnto 1260. yeres. Which indeede is a long time in comparision of three yeres & an halfe: but compared with the eternitie of Christs kingdome, it is as nothing. And that is one cause why the Lorde numbred it by daies

daies and moneths which quickly run out. But then here wil arise another scruple. If the kingdome of Antichrist shall continue twelue hundreth and sixtie yeares, we must either say that the Bishop of Rome was Antichrist more then a thousand yeares past, yea aboue thirteene hundreth, if wee take his raigne to bee no longer then vntill he was disclosed by the Gospell: or els we must say he hath yet long to continue. Let not this trouble vs, seeing it is most cleere and out of all controuersie, that in this booke, a number certaine, is put for an vncertaine. As in the seventh chapter of this booke it is sayd, that of euery tribe there was sealed twelue thousand. And because twelue times twelue amount vnto one hundreth fourtie and foure, it is sayd chapt. 14. that so many thousands stand with the Lambe vpon mount Sion. Is any man so vnwise, as to take it, that of euery tribe there should be saued iust twelue thousand neither more nor lesse, and so in all of the Iewes in these latter dayes iust an hundreth fourtie and foure thousands to bee saued? and not rather that the Lord by a number certaine doth declare that euen when his Church doth seeme vtterly to faile, he saue a great number, of which he expreseth not the iust summe. So in this place when God will comfort his people, hee sheweth that Antichrist shall tread downe the holie citie but for a short time, that is, two and fourtie moneths, which is but three yeares and an halfe, he meaneth not to note the iust number of yeares that he shall continue.

Thus much for the time of Antichrists treading downe the holy citie: Now we come to the builders, the true ministers of the Gospell, which should be in all the time of this treading downe. *But I will giue power to my two witnesses, and they shall prophesie a thousand two hundreth and sixtie daies, clothed in sackcloth.* Antichrist and his companie being those Gentiles which possesse the vtter court, do tread downe the holy citie, that is, the true Church of God, but shall they quite destroy it? or doth God in this time of Antichrists raigne forsake it? or shall there bee none to resist the tyrannous proceedings of Antichrist? This might bee demanded, and here is a full answer, God doth not forsake his Church, it shall not bee so troden downe as to bee quite destroyed, he doth not leaue it without true teachers, which resist that wicked companie by maintaining the Gospell, so that they cannot vtterly abolish the trueth. The multitude indeede to whom the court without the temple is giuen, is exceeding great, and the true worshippers are few in comparision of them. That huge multitude conspire agaynst the pure trueth of Gods word, and set vp lyes: but God will haue some witnesses at all times to witness to his trueth, and to condemne their falschood and lyes. And because the law did require that to establishe euery matter two witnesses should bee at the least, and his faithfull seruants in the prime of Antichrists raigne were very few, he speaketh of the least number, which is sufficient by the law to be admitted for witnesses. These are not to bee taken then for two and no more, but for all those worlie seruants of Christ, which from to time, both in the time of the persecuting Emperours, and also when the Poperie bare sway, were raised vp, and did teach the true wholesome doctrine, and impugne the great Antichrist, and his wicked clergie. These two witnesses of the Lord doo prophesie, that is, they expound the

liuely word, and feede Gods elect with hole some doctrine, condemning by the holy Scriptures all errors, idolatrie, and false worship. And how long shall they prophetic? euen all the time of Antichrists raigne: for that is cleerely expressed. For take thirtie dayes to the moneth, and the thousand two hundredth, and sixtie dayes, is all one with two and fourtie moneths. Antichrist shall with his compaignie tread downe the holie citie two and fourtie moneths, and the Lord will yet giue it, euen that holie citie (for so I take it rather then to say hee will giue power) vnto his two witneses, to instruct, to comfort, and to build vp in the truth 1260. dayes, that is, all that whole time of 42. moneths. If Antichrist tread downe the holie citie seuen hundredth yeares, yea if it be a thousand or more, all that same time the Lord would raise vp some or other, still to succede in the true ministrie, to preserve the remnants of his people. There was no time then in all poperie, but some haue preached the Gospell, and shewed boldly and plainly that the popish kingdome, is that bloudie kingdome of Antichrist, and their worship, euen the worship of diuels.

It may be some will demand how shall this appeare, that there were euer some raised vp, which preached against the Pope and his clergie? I answer, that all things are not written which were done in all places, but yet histories of all times doe testifie sufficiently of these two witneses, that is, of a competent number of true teachers. It shall not be needfull to mention those which were in the times of the heathen Emperours, or before the kingdome of poperie was growne strong against the truth, but those onely which in the midst of the darknes, which (I say) in the midst of the darknes, when the smoke of the bottomles pit did ouerspread all, did preach the truth, and were persecuted. In the yeare of our Lord 1158. which is now more then foure hundredth yeares past, *Gerhardus*, and *Dulcinus N. marensis*, did earnestly preach against the Church of Rome, and taught that the Pope is Antichrist: that the clergie and prelates of Rome were reiect, and were become the very whore of Babylon, prefigured in the Revelation. These (as histories doe testifie) came into England, and brought certaine others with them, who were by the king and the prelates burned in the forehead, and sent out of the realme: and after were put to death by the Pope. In the yeare 1160. *Waldus*, one of the chiefe men of the citie of Lions in France, was terrified at the sight of one that fell downe dead suddenly: he shewed great fruites of repentance, both by exercising the workes of mercie in relieuing the poore, and also by instructing himselfe and his familie in the word of God, and exhorting all that resorted vnto him to the same, and by translating certaine parts of the holy Scriptures into the french tongue, which he deliuered vnto many. He and a great number that receiued instruction by him, maintained the same doctrine drawne out of the holy Scriptures which we doe now, condemning the Masse to be wicked, the Pope Antichrist, and Rome Babylon, &c. They were threatned, and by violence of persecution scattered into many places, and some of them remained long in Bohemia. In the yeare 1212. the Pope caused an hundredth persons in the countrey of Alsatia, whereof diuers were noble men, to be burned in one day, for maintaining doctrine against the

the doctrine of the Romish Church. About the yeare 1230. almost all the Churches of the Grecians renounced the Church of Rome, because of their execrable simonie, and such abominable wickednesse. In the time of the Emperour *Fredericke* the second, about the yeare 1240. there were in the countrey of Sueuia many preachers, which preached freely against the Pope and his prelates, affirming boldly that the Pope and his sayd prelates were heretikes, & simoniakes, and such like. In the yere 1250. or there about, rose vp *Arnoldus de noua villa*, a Spanyard, a man famously learned and a great writer: he impugned the errors of the popish Church, and taught that the Pope led the people to hell. This *Arnoldus* was condemned as an heretike. About the same time *Guslielmus de sancto Amore*, a master of Paris, and a chiefe ruler of that Vniuersitie, applied all the testimonies of Scripture which are touching Antichrist, against the popish clergie. The Pope and his prelates condemned him for an heretike, he was banished, and his bookes burned. About the yeare 1290. *Laurence* an Englishman, a master of Paris, mightily proued the Pope to bee Antichrist, and the Synagogue of Rome to be Babylon: the Pope after his death caused his bones to be taken vp and burned. At the same time *Robertus Gatus*, a man of noble parentage, impugned the Pope and his clergie, calling the Pope an Idoll, and threatning the iudgements of God agaynst their abominable finnes. Also about the same time *Robert Grosted* Bishop of Lincolne, a man famously learned in three tongues, wrote diuers inuectiues agaynst the Pope. And when he was sicke, and lay vpon his death-bed, which was at Bugden, he called one *John Gile* a preaching Frier, complaining of the disorders of the Friers and Romane clergie, prouing the Pope to bee an heretike. And speaking of the manifold abuses of the Church of Rome, and particularly about their couetousnes and lecherie, he sayd they should not be deliuered from the seruitude of Egypt but by force. And being scarce able to vtter his words, with sobbing and weeping his breath went away, and so hee departed in the yeare 1253. which is now more then three hundredth yeares past. After his death the Pope would haue had his bones digged vp, but was terrified by a vision. About the yeare 1350. the Lord raised vp diuers learned men, which openly and boldly impugned the Church of Rome: as *Gregorie Arminensis*, who layd open the abuses of the Romish Synagogue, and confuted the popish doctrine of free will. *Tanleerus* in Germanie a preacher taught likewise. *Franciscus Petrarcha* at the same time, who calleth Rome the whore of Babylon, the mother of error, the temple of heresie. And a little before that, *Iohannes de rupe Scissa*, was cast into prison for rebuking the popish prelates for their great enormities, and for that he calleth the Church of Rome, the whore of Babylon, the Pope the minister of Antichrist, and the Cardinals false Prophets. And being in prison he wrote a booke, prophesying of the affliction which hung ouer the heads of the Spiritualtie for their vngodly life: hee called his booke, *Vade mecum in tribulatione*. Then was there Master *Conradus Hager*, who taught more then twentie yeares agaynst the Masse: hee was afterward shut vp in prison. *Gerhardus Rhidor* wrote a booke agaynst the Monkes and Friers, which hee intituled *Lachryma ecclesia*. About the same time

were *Michael Cefenas*, and *Petrus de Corbona*, and *Iohannes de Poliac*: these were condemned by the Pope and his adherents. The sayd *Michael* wrote a booke agaynst the pride, the tyrannie, and primacie of the Pope, accusing him to bee Antichrist, and the Church of Rome the whore of Babylon, dronke with the bloud of the Saints, &c. he left behind him many followers, of whom a great part were slaine by the Pope, some of them were burned. About the same time two Friars were put to death at Avinion for matters which they held against the Pope: one of them was called *Iohannes Rochetallada*, who did preach that the Church of Rome was Babylon, and the Pope and his Cardinals Antichrist. About the yere 1360. was set forth a writing against the Pope and the popish clergie, called a complaint of the plowman. About the same time, *Armachanus* an Archbishop in Ireland, was raised vp against Antichrist, he was a man of great learning and godlines, his troubles were many, and the deliuerances great which God gaue him. In the yere 1364. one *Nicholas Orem* preached a sermon before the Pope and his Cardinals, in which he rebuked the popish prelates, and denounced their destruction not to bee farre off for their most wicked abominations. About the yere 1370. liued *Mathias Parisiensis*, a Bohemian, who wrote a large booke of Antichrist, and noteth the Pope to bee the same. About the yere 1384. *Nilus* Archbishop of Thessalonica, wrote a large booke against the Romane Church. About the yere 1390. many were put to death for the Gospell, refusing the doctrine and worship of the Romish Church: As at Bringa there were burned 36. citizens of Maguntia. In the prouince of Narbone there were to the number of one hundreth and fourtie, which chose rather to suffer all torments then to receiue the Romish religion, and to deny the trueth of the most glorious Gospell. A good while before this time, there were 24. put to death at Paris. There were foure hundreth noted to be heretikes, fourescore beheaded, Prince *Armericus* was hanged, and the Ladie of the Castle was stoned to death. In the dayes of King *Edward* the third, about the yere 1371. began *John Wickliffe* of Oxensford openly to deale against the Pope and popish doctrine. The times were then very grievous, the popish kingdome of Antichrist being risen vp vnto very great strength and cruelty. King *Edward* the third himselfe being well learned and a valiant prince greatly withstood poperie: hee much fauoured and defended *Wickliffe*, so did diuers noble men, in so much that Master *Wickliffe* and others openly preaching against the Church of Rome, the Pope and his prelates doing what they could, were not able to hurt him. After the death of King *Edward*, he was greatly supported by the Londoners: and so escaped the hands of his aduersaries, still proclaiming the holy and heavenly doctrine of the Gospell against the Romish Antichrist. It pleased God by his preaching, and by his beokes to giue light vnto many in the land. Sundrie were put to death, of whom the Lord *Cobham* was one, and diuers fled out of the land, because they would not deny the trueth which they had learned from him. That popish Councell of Constance 41. yeres after his death, condemning his doctrine, caused his bones to be digged vp and burned. And as *Wickliffe*'s doctrine tooke place here in England and spread farre, so were some of his

workes

works caryed into Bohemia, where they did more preuaile, for about the 1410. *John Huss*, who taught in Bohemia, with diuers others the holy gospell of Iesus Christ, which a multitude zealously imbraced, and thereupon renounced the church of Rome, was cited to appeare before the pope which hee auoided. And about the yere 1414. he was charged againe to appeare at Rome, then was hee excommunicated, and much molestation followed, but he continued a constant witnesse of Christ, and openly impugned the Romish Synagogue, vntill the Councell of Constance, where he was condemned as an heretike and burned.

In the same Councell also *Jerome* of Prague, a worthie seruant of Christ in resisting the Romish harlot, was condemned and then burned. These men were put to death, but Antichrist and all his power could not roote out the gospell in Bohemia. God raised them vp a valiant captaine *Iohn Zisca*, and they put to flight great armies of the papistes that came against them. I will not stand to shewe what persecutions followed about this time in England, and what a number were vexed, and manie put to death, they called them at that time Lollards. Come downe lower, when the Romish prelates had now long persecuted, and seemed to haue rooted out with fire and sword almost all the professors and preachers of the gospell the Lord raised vp new witnesses, men famously learned and godly. Among these *Wielus Groeningensis*, who died in the yere 1490. which is now an hundreth and three yeres past. He was so worthy a man, that hee was called *Lux mundi*, that is, the light of the worlde. Hee disputed mightily and boldly against poperie, and prooued their doctrine false and wicked, and that the popes keyes doe not open but shut heauen gates.

In the yere 1500. *Hieronimus Sauonarola* a Monke in Italic, with two other Friars named *Dominick*, and *Siluester*, were condemned to death at Florence. They taught and maintained against the pope and the popish doctrine, the things which we doe now. These faithfull witnesses were not fruitlesse, as may appeare by the persecutions and murderings which followed after them in diuers places. In the raigne of King *Henry* the seuenth, liued *Iohannes Picus* the Earle of Mirandula: he was but 32. yeres old when he dyed, and yet of great learning. He made open challenge at Rome to dispute with any against sundry points of poperie: The popish prelates would not dispute, but did article against him touching suspicion of heresie. We are now come downe euen within a very few yeres of the time that God raised vp his worthy seruant *Martin Luther*, and then together with him sundry others to pull downe Antichrist, and to deliuer his poore Church from grievous thraldome and miserable bondage, so that I need not to proceed any further. Wee may see by this that I haue noted, that the Lord euer had some faithfull witnesses which withstood the Romish Antichrist, and taught the truth to his people. Thus much then touching that one thing that the Lord had alwaies some faithfull ministers of his gospell, euen in the depth of poperie.

That he speaketh of so small a number of witnesses: we are taught thereby not to depende vpon the greater multitude in the ministerie, but vpon those which purely teach the trueth, and lead a godly life agreeable to the same, following the

steppes of Christ and his Apostles. The papists brag much of their multitudes; and would thereby oppresse the faithfull ministers of Christ as being fewe in number. Some are much troubled at the same: but what if the deuill and Antichrist haue two thousand seruants, for euery two true seruants of the Lord? are they y^e lesse to be regarded? was not one *Elias*, being one true prophet of God better then foure hundred false prophets of Baal? Bee not troubled, be not dismayed when it shall bee objected, these be but few against many, but looke to the way of truth and sound godlines, looke which haue the right on their side. The malignant Church oftentimes hath exceeding many goodly prelates, when the true Church seemeth to be almost vtterly banished out of the earth. The trueth of God dependeth not vpon the multitude of the voices of men which conspire together. It is sayde further, that these two witnessess shall propheticie a thousand two hundredth and sixtie dayes clothed in sackcloth. This setteth forth the apparell of Christs Ministers. In olde time when men did fast and mourne dolefully, they did vse to put on sackcloth.

This propheticie speaking mystically, and vnder figures, is not to bee taken here according to the letter, that the true witnessess of Christ, euen his faithful preachers shall all the time of Antichrist be clothed in sacke: but that indeed they shall haue a sorrowfull life here vpon the earth, yea so full of griefe and lamentation, as if they did alwaies fast and mourne. A very good place to stand a little vpon, to note the difference betwene the true Ministers of Christ, and the wicked pompous Antichristian prelates. Begin with the prophets in the time of the law. They were sent of the Lord to rebuke al estates, & to reclaim them from their wicked waies. When they saw how stifnecked the people were, and how rebelliously they despised the counsels of the Lord: When they were hated and persecuted, what was their life but a continuall sorow? what could they doe but mourne from day to day? And how meane were they then in the eyes of the world? were they in pompe and iollitie? No verily, for with them it was as if they had alwaies beene clothed in sacke. When other men did solace and sporte themselves, they did lament and sorowe. What should I speake of the glorious Apostles of our Saviour Iesus Christ? what was the whole life of that chosen vessell Paul, after he was called to preach the gospel? The historie of the Acts of the Apostles, sheweth his life. Shall we thinke that Peter found any better entertainment then he did? Was Iames, or John, or any of the rest in outward iollitie? we are sure they were not. Then leaue them, and come downe to those that succeeded, and especially in the time of Antichrist, and what shall wee find but men clothed in sacke? God did manifest his trueth vnto them, and raised them vp, and appointed them to be his witnessess. They did lay open the way of life, and reprove the whorish Babylon, and all abominable vices. Their word, & their testimonie which they bare was despised, & condemned almost of al men, euen as heretic. All that gaue credite to the same, were deemed ranke heretikes. They were cruelly persecuted, accursed, and murdered. They saw the wicked flourish. They saw idolatrie, superstition, and errours most abominable, set vp and maintained, and the worship and glory of God troden downe. They saw the people

people seduced by the great Antichrist, sitting in the temple of GOD, and led by leapers into hell. Alas what could they find but sorrow and griefe of heart? howe could they now but be clothed in sacke? how could they but mourne and lament? Then looke vpon the contrary side, the pope and his Cardinals, his great prelates, and clergie masters, were they clothed in sacke? were they in bitter griefe and sorrow? Nay they haue beene with pompe, and pride, and outward glory arrayed in all pretious costly things, like to the princes of the earth: as with gold, silver, pearles, pretious stones, silkes, scarlet, purple, and with all fine clothing. They liued in all pleasures and delicacie, feeding vpon all the fatteest things, and sweetest that might be gotten for money. Here wee see then a very great difference betwene these, and the true and faithfull witnessess of Christ clothed in sacke. The histories of those times do shew, what great complaints there were of the pride and excesse of the popish clergie.

And now what shall we say for our time? Doubtles the true ministers of the Lord haue no cause to giue themselves to the mirth, the iollitie, and brauerie of the world. But there is cause still, yea euen in these dayes to be clothed in sacke: that is, to lament and mourne. For how doe we see the voice of God despised? how is his glory defaced, the proud magnified, and vanitie extolled? Alas there is cause of great mourning to all that loue the Lorde, and wee are not to thinke that it will be better.

If we therefore will approue ourselves to be the Lords faithfull witnessess, wee must not seeke the pompe, the riches, the pleasures, the ease, and the delicacie of this worlde: let those things alone for the ministers of Antichrist, whose bellie is their God, which mind earthly things: but wee must painefully labour to aduaunce the trueth, to pull downe errours and wicked vices, wee must lament and mourne to see the truth so much despised, the Lord our God so highly dishonored,

and men running headlong to destruction. Then shall wee please
God, and our ministerie shall be blessed. Thus
much for this time.



The 22. Sermon.

CHAP. II.

- 4 These are two Olive trees, and two candlestickes, standing before the God of the earth.
- 5 And if any will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and shal deuour their enemies: for if any will hurt them, so must he be killed.
- 6 These haue power to shut heauen, that it raine not in the daies of their prophcing, and haue power ouer waters to turne them into bloud, and to smite the earth with all manner of plagues, as oft as they will.
- 7 And when they haue finished their testimonie, the beast that commeth out of the bottomlesse pit shall make warre against them, and shal overcome them, and shall kill them.
- 8 And their corpses shall lie in the streetes of the great citie, which is called spiritually Sodome and Egypt, where our Lord also was crucified.
- 9 And they of the people, and kinreds, and tongues, and Gentiles, shall see their corpses three daies and an halfe, and shall not suffer their corpses to bee put in graues.
- 10 And they that dwell vpon the earth shall reioyce ouer them, and they shall be glad, and they shall send gifts one to an other, for these two Prophets tormented the inhabitants of the earth.
- 11 But after three daies and an halfe, the spirite of life which came from God, shall enter into them, and they shall stand vpon their feet, and great feare shal fall vpon them which see them.
- 12 And they heard a great voice from heauen, saying vnto them, come vp hither. And they went vp into heauen in a clowde: and their enemies sawe them.
- 13 And in that houre there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the citie fell, and in the earthquake were slaine names of men, seuen thousand, and the rest were terrified and gaue glory to the God of heauen.



Saint Iohn proceedeth forward in the description of these two witnesses, of whom we spake the last time in the former verses. And because to the eye of the worlde, or in externall shew, the true ministers of the gospell seeme very base, very meake, and contemptible, and to haue nothing excellent or pretious in them: and moreouer it seemeth that they bee overcome, troden downe, and vtterly vanquished by their enemies: least

least we should be carried awry with that opinion, they are here set forth to bee honourable in the fight of God, and full of spirituall treasures wherewith they enrich the Church, and heavenly power also is in them, wherewith they be armed, euen vnto a maruclous victorie and triumph ouer those which seeme to overcome them. This place is then, as we shall see, for to teach vs, that we must not esteeme of Christs ministers according to outward appearance in externall glorie and worldly pompe, which indeede they haue not: but according to the heavenly and spirituall graces, and power with which they are furnished, for the weapons of their warfare are spirituall.

Let vs looke vpon the words as they lye. He sayth they be two oliue trees, and two candlestickes, &c. Wee reade in Moses, that the oyle of oliues is very swete and pretious. And it is vsuall in the holy Scriptures (as all doe knowe) by swete pretious oyles wherewith they did vse to annoynt them, to represent the graces of the holy Ghost. This heavenly pretious oyle, euen these swete graces of the holy Ghost, the Lord powreth vpon his Church by his faithfull ministers: and therefore they are sayd to bee two oliue trees, they haue the swete oyle of the spirit, not to themselues alone, but for others. They bee also two Candlestickes: ye knowe what the vse of candlesticks is. They beare vp the pure light of Gods word, which from them shineth vpon men, as the candlestickes doe beare the candles set vpon them. Then that they are sayd to stand before the God of the earth, it is to shewe that they be his instruments which ruleth not onely in the heauens, but also in the earth, yea euen then when all things seeme to be ordered at the will of Satan and wicked men: for wee will acknowledge that God ruleth in the heauens, but in such times we can hardly beleue that he ruleth in the earth. We may note from hence, what a pretious vse there is of the ministrie of the Gospell: and what blessings God doth giue by it. For what can be more necessarie? what can bee more for our spirituall comfort and eternall blessednes, then to haue the Lord powre into our hearts the heavenly and spirituall graces of the holy Ghost, which is figured by the oliue trees, and to shine vnto vs with the true light, which he doth by his ministers, as they are sayd to be candlestickes? Here also the ministers of the Gospell may learne, if they will bee true ministers of Christ, what manner of persons they ought to be, euen fresh oliue trees, and candlestickes, that is, full of heavenly graces dropping from them, and full of cleere light, both in pure doctrine, and godly conuersation. Blessed bee such instruments, that stand before the God of the earth, yea a thousand times blessed of God, their worke is so pretious. And woe be to them which hold the place, and through their darknes and fleshly minde, are nothing lesse, then oliue trees and candlestickes. Thus wee see what pretious instruments they are vnto the children of God: now let vs see with what might and power they be armed against the wicked enemies and prophane worldlings. And if (such he) any will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and deuoureth their enemies: for if any will hurt them so must he be killed. These haue power to shut heauen that it raine not in the dayes of their prophcing, &c. It may seeme strange that we ascribe this which is here written vnto the ordinary ministers and

preachers of the Gospell: for where haue those preachers been seene or heard of, that haue had fire proceeding out of their mowthes to deuoure their enemies? Where haue we knowne of such as could shut the heauens that it should not raine? or that haue turned waters into bloud, and strooke the earth with all manner of plagues when they would? are there any such ministers now? or haue wee read of such in time of poperie? For answer vnto this, ye must know that this booke vttereth almost all things mystically. For indeede the doctrine of Gods word, which proceedeth out of the mouth of his faithfull witnesses, is a fire that shall deuoure and slay all the wicked enemies. It shall not slay them with bodily death, for that way the beast preuaileth agaynst the seruants of Christ, but as a fire it shal deuoure them for euer with a spirituall death. O mightie is the glorious word of the Lord, and it triumpheth ouer all: for those whom it doth not purge as pure gold, it burneth them vp like drossie. Let vs take heede how we despise and resist it, and let vs beware how we become enemies vnto the true ministers of it. For they be starke mad, and know not what they doe, which oppose themselves agaynst the ministers of Christ. They must bee killed and deuoured with this terrible fire, and yet they know it not. This is plaine enough touching the fire which proceedeth out of their mouth: but how shall wee vnderstand that which followeth, that they haue power to shut heauen that it raine not, that also they can turne waters into bloud, and strike the earth with all manner of plagues, which of all the preachers hath done these things? Thus it is. Elias did shut the heauens, that it rained not in three yeares and sixe moneths. Moses turned the waters into bloud, and strooke the land of Egypt with sundrie plagues. And now the faithfull witnesses of Christ, the true ministers of his Gospell are compared to these two great Prophets Moses and Elias, not that they shall worke those myracles which they did in such outward things, but that they shall be furnished with a power in spirituall things, which is no lesse. The great power of God is in the ministrie of the Gospell, as ye may reade 2. Corinth 10. euen to cast downe euery high thing which exalteth it selfe agaynst God, &c. This power is not visible, and therefore it pleased God to furnish his prophets and his apostles with the power to worke wonders vnto the bodily sight of men, that hereby they might be led to consider of that inuisible power of God with which they were armed. Now although the faithfull ministers haue not the power to worke these externall signes and wonders: yet because they haue that glorious inuisible power which is the greater, they are sayd to haue also that power to doe outward signes and wonders, which was but as a witnes of that other. I know that this is farre from the common opinion of men, because they can see if a wonder be wrought before their bodily eyes, but they haue no eyes of the soule to behold the most wonderfull and glorious power of the Gospell, in throwing downe the power of darknes, euen the kingdome and power of the diuell, in sauuing the faithfull, and destroying the rebellious. The Lord our God by these speeches of shutting of heauen, that it raine not in the dayes of their prophesying of turning waters into bloud, and striking the earth with all manner of plagues, doth lead vs to the consideration of that inuisible power which is in the true ministrie of

of his word. Saint Paul sayth, the Gospell is the power of God vnto saluation, to euery one that beleueth, Rom. 1. It is the arme of the Lord, Esay. 53. Therefore let not vs be blinded to thinke meanly of it according to the outward shew of the ministers. I would stand no longer vpon these words, but it is needfull here a little to answer the Papists. For from hence they draw one of their chiefe arguments, by which they would proue that the Pope is not Antichrist. Thus they reason (if I may call it reasoning, which yet indeede is plaine doting) If Enoch and Elias haue not yet come and resisted the Bishop of Rome, then is not (say they) the Bishop of Rome Antichrist. But these two men Enoch and Elias, haue not come and resisted the Pope, therefore he cannot be Antichrist. For they take it that the two witnesses here spoken of are indeede Enoch and Elias, and that they shal come downe from heauen in person, and preach agaynst Antichrist three yeares and an halfe, & then be killed by him. They haue for this, the opinion of some ancient writers, but indeed with varietie, & nothing as they vaunt and would make shew of. They stand also to proue the same by the holic Scriptures, but faile vtterly therein. For although the holy Scriptures doe testifie, that Enoch was translated and saw not death, and that Elias was taken vp in a fierie chariot: yet to say that their bodies were receiued into heauen we cannot: much lesse can it be proued that they shall come downe from heauen, and liue among men, and preach agaynst Antichrist, and then bee killed. Yes (say the papists) touching Elias it is cleere, that hee shall come agayne in person, euen by the words of the Prophet Malachy: Behold I send you Elias the prophet, &c. How importunate would these papists be, if our Sauour himselfe had not expounded that saying of the prophet touching the coming of Elias? So they might haue some colour of matter to proue that Antichrist is not yet come, they will strengthen the lewes in their opinion, that the Messias is not yet come. For when the Lord Iesus Christ the redeemer was come, the Scribes sayd he was not the Christ, and why? because (sayd they) Elias must first come and restore all things, as the Lord promised by the prophet Malachy. This you may see in Matth 17. vers. 10. They erred because they looked that Elias should come in person: whereas the meaning of the Lord by the prophet was, that hee would send one to prepare the way before the face of his Sonne, which should come with the spirit and power of Elias, as the Angell doth expound it vnto Zacharias the father of Iohn Baptist, Luk. 1. vers. 17. Our Sauour made answer vnto his Disciples that indeede Elias must come, and then addeth further that hee was already come, and they did not know him, Matth. 17. And when he had spoken much in the commendation of the greatnes of Iohn the Baptist, in the end he addeth, and if ye will receiue it, this is that Elias which was for to come, Matth. 17. vers. 14. Can the papists with any face stand now to maintaine that this place of Malachy was and is to be taken, that Elias should come in spirit first before Christ to prepare his way and then in person to resist Antichrist? If Iohn Baptist bee that Elias which should by promise come, what can moue vs to looke for another Elias? What shall wee with the lewes looke for Elias to come in person, and so call into question whether the true Messias be yet come? The prophet Malachy speaketh

keeth from the Lord vnto his owne nation, saying, Behold I will send vnto ye Elias the prophet, he shall turne the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers, &c. whereby it is euident, that if Elias must come in person it must be vnto them, that is I say, to the Iewes, and to restore all things among them. But the Angell, and our Sauour himselfe haue shewed that this prophetic is alreadie fulfilled and all things therein haue been performed by Iohn the Baptist. And so for ought that the Iesuites can cauill vpon this place touching the two witnesses, it remaineth still as cleere as the Sunne, for ought that is here agaynst it, that the Pope is the great Antichrist.

Thus much touching the spirituall and heauenly power wherewith the true ministers of the Gospell are armed, and for which they bee likened and compared to the two great prophets Elias and Moses. Let vs now proceede to the rest. Here is set forth in the next place the sauage crueltie, that Antichrist, and his seduced multitude of idolatrous subiects, should exercise vpon these true and faithfull witnesses of our Lord Iesus Christ. One way, that is touching the bodily death they preuaile agaynst them, and ouercome them: but another way (as wee shall see) these wortheie seruants of the Lord doe triumph in victorie ouer them most gloriously. These are the words: And when they haue finished their testimonie, the beast which commeth out of the bottomles pit, shall make warre agaynst them, and shall kill them. As the fire which commeth out of their mouthes deuoureth their enemies, and slayeth them with a spirituall death: so the power of the Antichristian kingdome shall bee bent agaynst them, ouermatch them, and slay them with the corporall death: so farre shall the Romish tyrannie preuaile ouer them. The beast is sayd here to come out of the bottomles pit, that is, out of hell. And some doe hold that the great Antichrist shall be a very diuell indeede, and it may be that they which thinke so, are moued by this place so to thinke: for no men, but diuels doe come from hell. But indeede their opinion is vaine, and this speech maketh nothing at all for it. Seeing (as wee shall obserue when wee come to the 13. chapter) the beast is not put so much for the men, as for the sauage and beastly power which those men doe exercise. And also the power is of the diuell, which the beast should exercise: for the dragon giueth to this beast his power, his throne, and great authoritie, as wee reade chapt. 13. vers. 2. Then it commeth out of the bottomles pit of hell. This cruell power which the diuell giueth to Antichrist and his ministers, is wholly bent agaynst the faithfull preachers and ministers of the Gospell: for it is sayd, that hee shall make warre agaynst them. As indeede there is great cause: for their doctrine, euen the pure and most wholesome doctrine of God, dooth discouer their blasphemous filthie abominations. And so if that take place, downe goeth their credit and estimation, which in no wise they can abide, and therefore make warre. Then further, wee see it is the holie will of the Lord, that the beast in warring agaynst the Prophets, shall preuaile agaynst them, ouercome them, and kill them.

This must not seeme strange, seeing all sortes of enemies haue beene permitted so farre at one time or other, when the Lord would giue his high honour vnto his

his seruants, that they should be his witnesses euen with the shedding of their blood. Then let all men take heede, when they see or heare of the cruell murdering of the preachers and professors of the gospell, that these thoughts, or this manner of reasoning enter not into their mind as to thinke or say thus: The Pope and his, doe preuaile against the preachers and professors, and cut them down, therefore God doth blesse and fauour the Church of Rome: He alloweth their worship & religion. Or thus: the preachers and professors are withall dishonour, contempt, and reproch, cut off and trode downe euen as the mire in the streetes, therefore God careth not for them: for if they were deere and pretious vnto him, he would not suffer them to bee so vsed. This reasoning is farre awrie, for yee see it here plainly expressed that God giueth power to the beast, cruelly to murder his faithfull witnesses, which yet notwithstanding are very deere and pretious in his sight. Nothing is or can bee more euident then this: and yet many are astonished, and many are seduced at the beholding of the same. Their sight can pearce no deeper then to the externall apparance and view of matters, & according to that they do iudge. Here is yet one thing worthy speciall obseruation, and that is, that the beast shall not preuaile against them to kill them, vntill such time as they haue finished their testimonie: They must first performe their seruice to the Church for which they are appointed. The Lorde doth protect them from the power and rage of Antichrist, vntill such time as they haue done their whole message. The most high gouernour ouer all will haue his truth vttered, and his work finished; he will haue his seruants accomplish (as I sayd) their whole seruice, before they be cut off. We read in the gospell, that the enemies would haue layd hold of Christ, but his hower was not yet come. Euen so, vntill their hower be come, they cannot touch these. It is added, *That their corpses shall lie in the streetes of the great citie, which spiritually is called Sodom & Egypt where our Lord was crucified.* These words do declare a most bitter hatred, and a most sauage crueltie in the men of Antichrists Synagogue, against the Saints of God. For they are not satisfied, nor contented with killing of them, no not with all the torments, tortures, and reproches, which they cause them to endure while they be alue: but after they be dead, they doe them all the dishonour which they can, by casting forth their dead bodies in the open places, denying them the honour of buriall.

Their whole drift and purpose in this, is to haue those pretious bodies of the holie Martyrs, esteemed to bee no better then dead carrion, euen the dead bodies of dogges or swine: and so they would terrifie others. Whereby wee may see now how here in the world, the Lord doth suffer his glorious witnesses to be cast into all outward ignominie. If they could put them vnto a thousand deaths, this place sheweth that they should be sure of it. And because they would make it (as I sayd) a spectacle and a terrour vnto others to driue them from their doctrine, they cast their flaine bodies into the open streetes of their bloodie citie. Why will I now say, will they suffer the dead carkasses of men to lye in the streetes? will it not annoy them, & be so vnholysome that they shall not be able to abide it? And if it be cleere that Rome is this great citie, the seate of Antichrist, what preachers of the Gospell haue

haue been slaine there, and cast forth into the streetes there to lye? I answer, that we may not take this to bee spoken of the streetes within the walles of the citie of Rome, but looke how farre the power and dominion of Rome hath spread it self, looke how farre Antichrist the Pope hath exercised tyrannie ouer the Churches in many great and large kingdomes, so farre goe the streetes of the great citie. Those which haue been cruelly murdered in France, and cast forth into open place in the fields, haue lien in the streetes of the great citie. Likewise in England, in Scotland, in Spayne, in Germany, and in all the rest: for hitherto reached the streetes of the great citie. In these countries there haue been many faithfull ministers of Christ cruelly put to death, and all the dishonour that might be was then shewed to their dead bodies. This same great citie, this Church or Synagogue of Antichrist, boasteth her selfe to bee the holie, the pure, and the chaste Spouse of Christ, euen the mother of all the faithfull children of God: when as indeede for her uncleannes and filthines of life most detestable, the Lord calleth her Sodom: and for her Idolatrie, and sore bondage in which she hath held and oppressed Gods people, he calleth her Egypt. Sodom was filthy in her wickednesse not to be spoken, but not more filthy then Rome, and the Romish Synagogue, and rabblement of Popes, Cardinals, Monkes, Friars and Nunnes. Egypt was full of superstition, and of most foule and grosse Idolatrie, when she held the children of Israel in cruel bondage, but Rome hath exceeded her in both. And marke how the Lord saith that this great citie is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt: for this teacheth vs that the litterall name is another: as wee shall see it plaine in the 17. chapter, that the seate of the beast is litterally to be called Rome. Then Rome in letter, but spiritually, Sodom and Egypt. Then he addeth, where our Lord was crucified. Full glad are the Papists of this clause, for hereby they say it is euident, that Rome is not the great citie which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, seeing all doe know that Christ was not crucified at Rome, but at Ierusalem. Ierusalem, Ierusalem, say they is the great citie where Antichrist shall raigne, and therefore the Pope cannot be Antichrist, because he hath his seate at Rome, and not in the Temple at Ierusalem, where Christ was crucified. Let this trouble no man, for doubtles Christ was crucified at Rome. If any shall reply, that the foure Euangelists doe testifie that hee was crucified at Ierusalem: I answer, that is most true: but yet he was also crucified at Rome. Was he then twise crucified? No: but thus, if wee respect the place, hee was crucified at Ierusalem: if we respect the power and authoritie that put him to death, he was crucified at Rome: Rome ruled at that time in Ierusalem. Reade the Euangelists, and ye shall finde that Ierusalem at that time was in subiection vnto the Empire and dominion of Rome. Pontius Pilate was deputed for the Emperour of Rome in Ierusalem. The Iewes (as they confesse) had no authoritie to put any man to death, Iohn 18. vers. 31. and therefore they accuse him before Pilate. Pilate saw that they did it of enmie, and would haue deliuered him. Then they cryed out that if he did deliuer him he was not Cæsars friend, because he maketh himselfe a king. In which words they did accuse our Sauour of treason agaynst the Emperour, because hee made himselfe a king. Hereupon Pilate did condemne him to death,

death, and set this title vpon his crosse, as the cause of his death: *Iesus of Nazareth, king of the Iewes*. Then lay all these things together, Christ is crucified by the power of the Emperour of Rome in his deputed Pilate: he was accused and put to death for treason agaynst the Emperour, which they wickedly layd to his charge. And therefore the holy Ghost sayth plainly he was crucified at Rome. Rome then crucified the head: Rome hath since cruelly murdered the members. Rome is that purple whore, which is drunken with the blood of the Saints.

Hitherto the crueltye of the beast agaynst the Lords witnesses, and now followeth the rage of the blind multitude which are seduced by the beast. He sayth, that they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and Gentiles shall see their corpses three dayes and an halfe, and shall not suffer their corpses to be put in graues. O sauage crueltye, they dishonor them all that they can, allowing the crueltye of Antichrist in sheading their blood: what beastly crueltye is this? The time is also noted in which they shall see their corpses lie vnburied, to be 3. daies and an halfe. Before he spake of 42. moneths, which is three yeares and an halfe, and of a thousand, two hundred and threescore dayes, which is the same: but here because he speaketh of the lying of dead bodies vnburied, he mystically calleth it three daies and an halfe, which is the same time with the former. Then next is noted the ioy, the gladnesse, and mirth which the inhabitants of the earth shall make that these prophets are ouercome by the beast and so cruelly slaine. For he sayth, that the inhabitants of the earth shall reioyce ouer them, and be glad, and shall send gifts one to another. This doth shew what an extreame hatred the blind world doth beare agaynst the true preachers of the Gospell. We may learne by it, how farre they be from al excuse, which in the darke times of poperie were led awry into Idolatrie, and false religion, that they loued and liked so well of the proceedings of the beast, and hated so bitterly the pure heauenly doctrine of the Gospell. It is euen the same which S. Paul speaketh 2. Thess. 2. that because they receiued not the loue of the truth that they might be saued: God shall send them strong delusion to beleue lyes: that all they might be damned, which beleued not the truth, but had pleasure in vnrighteousnes. For in the raigne of Antichrist, such as gave eare to the Lords witnesses, and imbraced their holy doctrine, were saued, but the other had pleasure in vnrighteousnesse, and were so exceeding glad at the murdering of the prophets, that they send gifts one to another, as the manner is at ioyfull times when mens hearts are merrie. But this is more euident by the clause that followeth, when he sayth these two prophets tormented the inhabitants of the earth. Men are glad and reioyce exceedingly when such are destroyed and taken away as did torment them, and these prophets did torment them. If the preachers of the Gospell be the tormentors of the world, why should the world bee blamed for hating of them? Yes, for that they torment, it ariseth from the fault of the inhabitants of the earth, and not from the fault of the preachers. For what is it which doth torment, but the fire which commeth out of their mouth? and that is the pure doctrine of God. Now this doctrine to such as loue God, is most sweete and holefome, as the Prophet Dauid witnesseth, Psalm. 19. but to those which loue darknes, and that take pleasure

pleasure in vnrightheousnesse, it is a tormenting fire, yea euen a flame that shall burne them vp, and deuoure them for euer. Marke the contrary effect in the ministrie of the true prophets of the Lord, or the diuers working. To the faithful that loue the Lord, there is nothing more sweete and comfortable, then the heauenly doctrine of Christ vttered by his faithfull seruants, it doth euen feede their soules, and fill them with ioy and gladnesse, so that they tenderly loue the messengers which bring it euen as the instruments of their eternall blessednesse. But on the contrary part, to the inhabitants of the earth, euen to the men which haue their portion in this life, which delight in the wayes of their flesh, and follow such a religion as agreeth to their owne wisdom, this pure doctrine of God bringeth grievous torment, and therefore they hate most deadly the men which doe vtter it. This place doth teach vs what a torment it is to the reprobate, when they heare the holy word of God nakedly and purely preached. This place doth open vnto vs what is the cause, that the holy prophets in old time, and the Apostles, and faithfull ministers of the word since Christ haue been hated, persecuted, and cruelly murdered: euen this, that their doctrine did torment the wicked world so sore that they could not abide it. Marueile not (brethren) that the godly preachers at this day haue many bitter enemies, for there bee innumerable whose consciences are so euill, and that take such delight and pleasure in their owne sinfull lusts, that the holy word of God when it is rightly preached, doth torment and vex them wonderfully. Some doe account it a great fault in the preachers, when any of the people doe storme and rage at their doctrine, and they would haue them so to vtter the word, as to grieue or displease none: but looke vpon that which is here sayd, the true seruants of Christ, so faithfully deliuer their message, that it stingeth and tormenteth the inhabitants of the earth, and maketh them euen as mad men to rage in wrath and furie. Gods truth must bee vttered, let the inhabitants of the earth whom it tormenteth, broyle and take on neuer so much: yea let them with mad furie runne vpon the ministers of the Lord and murder them, yet they must not keepe silence, they may not keepe backe that fire which proceedeth out of their mouth, which dooth torment and deuoure the enemies. Agayne, let all people here be warned how they oppose themselves agaynst the holy word, for it will torment them exceedingly. Seeke to purge the heart, and then it shall not be a tormenting fire, but a sweete and pretious foode vnto the soule. Blessed are they which finde it so: and most wretched is euery one whom it tormenteth.

Hauiug thus faire set forth the victorie of the beast in killing the Lords witnesses: as also his crueltie, and the sauage furie of his seduced multitude in dishonoring them after they be dead: he commeth now to declare the spirituall victorie and heauenly honour which these holy seruants of the Lord obtaine euen in the sight and view of the world. They were alwayes in triumph and honor with God: but in the world all the time in which poperie preuailed, they lay as men couered with ignominie and reproch, condemned and accursed as heretikes. And then were canonized for Saints such as shewed themselves valiant champions for the defence of the tyrannie of Antichrist. After three dayes and an halfe, euen when the

the time was come that poperie must bee disclosed by the light of the Gospell breaking forth, there followeth a great alteration. These prophets are raised vp agayne, for he sayth that the spirit of life which came from God shall enter into them, and they shall stand vpon their seete. This is somewhat strange: but wee may not take this so, as that the witnesses of the Lord the prophets which the beast slew, shall be raised vp in their owne persons, (which yet they shall be at the generall resurrection) but God doth here raise vp other witnesses endued with the same spirit which they were, vttering and maintaining the same truth, & the same cause agaynst Antichrist, and pulling downe his vsurped power. This was first fulfilled when God raised vp his noble instruments and most worthie seruants master *Luther*, master *Calum*, *Peter Martir*, *Bucer*, and many other. This is fulfilled daily in all the faithfull ministers of Christ, raised vp in all countries. Let no man thinke that this exposition is beside the holy Scriptures, when ye see, that the Lord sayd that he would send *Elias* the prophet, and yet *Elias* came not in person, but *Iohn the Baptist* in the spirit and power of *Elias*. And looke well vpon the cause, the seruants of the Lord which were murdered in time of poperie, or which were condemned as heretikes, and so lay vnder all ignominie and reproch among men: as *Wickliffe*, *Huse*, *Hierome of Prage*, and many other, are they not after a sort also euen raised vp to life, yea euen in their owne persons, when their doctrine and their cause is most mightilie defended by the liuely word which is come from God? Doe they not euen as it were stand vpon their seete agayne? Is there not a great feare fallen vpon many that see it? They neuer looked for such an alteration, which worshipped the beast.

And touching the words which follow, is there not a great voyce from heauen to bid them come thither? And are they not ascended vp euen in the sight of their enemies? Doth not the mightie voyce of God in his word which is from heauen, cleere them from being heretikes, and manifest that they were true prophets of the Lord, and now partakers of the heauenly glorie? This word (I say) carrieth them vp into heauen as it were in a clowd. This word sheweth that those popish Saints whom Antichrist did canonize, as *Thomas Becket*, and suchlike, were wicked Idolaters. The Papists, and especially the Iesuites doe bite and gnaw at this, but cannot tell how to remedie it. They labour with all their might, still to dishonour those worthie witnesses of the Lord, whom their king Antichrist slew, and to honour those popish champions, but all in vaine: for this great voyce from heauen, euen the cleere word is too strong for them, and doth beate them downe. It layeth open the filthines of those whom they extoll, and it aduanceth euen to the heauens the true ministers of the Gospell whom they condemne.

Here is yet another thing remaining, an earthquake, and the effect thereof. He sayth, *In that houre there was a great earthquake*. Euen at the time in which God raiseth vp his seruants to spread the light of his Gospell, to discouer all the wicked abominations of Antichrist, and to giue honor to his former prophets, falleth out this great earthquake. But will some say, when heard we of such an earthquake? I answer, that by this earthquake are meant the commotions, the seditions, the tumults

mults and warres among the kingdomes and nations of the world, which haue bin very great euer since the gospell brake forth. All that be of yeares doe know what great shakings there haue beene, and yet are. And now touching the effect of this earthquake, the tenth part of the great citie doth fall. The Romish Synagogue commeth downe, yea it commeth downe dayly, there is such a mightie shaking. Many are departed fro the, their glory is impaired, yea they are constrained to forsake some of their owne superstitious inuentions, and to confesse that they were errors. And further, there is this effect of the earthquake, that in it there are slaine seuen thousand. Seuen is vsed in the Scriptures for a full and perfect number, and so by seuen thousand are meant many thousands, euen all those vpon whome the grieuous iudgements of God doe fall, and roote them out. And it is sayd, the rest were terrified, & gaue glory to the God of heauen. Blessed be God, many repent in these dayes, euen in the midst of these commotions and fearefull iudgements of God. Yea they turne from the worshipping of Idols, and giue glory to the God of heauen. In the time of the murdering armie, chap. 9. when the third part of men were slaine, it is sayde that the rest repented not of their idolatrie: blessed bee the times into which we are fallen, although they bee otherwise troublesome, for in them God giueth repentance to many.



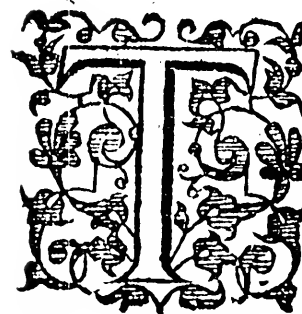
The 23. Sermon.

CHAP. II.

- 14 *The second woe is past, behold the third woe will come anon.*
 15 *And the seventh Angell blew the trumpet, and there were great voices in heauen, saying, the kingdomes of this world are our Lordes, and his Christ, and he shall raigne for euermore.*
 16 *Then the 24. Elders which sate before God on their seates, fell vpon their faces, and worshipped God,*
 17 *Saying, we giue thee thanks O Lord God Almighty, which art, which wast, and which art to come: for thou hast receiued thy great might, and hast obtained thy kingdome.*
 18 *And the Gentiles were angrie, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should bee iudged, and that thou shouldest giue reward vnto thy seruants the Prophets and Saints, & to them that feare thy name small and great, and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.*

19 And

- 19 *And the Temple of God was opened in heauen, and there was scene in his Temple, the arke of his Testament, and there followed lightnings, and voyces, and thundrings, and earthquake, and much haile.*



He opening of the seuenth scale of this booke, is as yee know diuided into the sounding of seuen trumpets: where foure of them were sounded, an Angel flyeth in the midst of heauen, saying with a loud voice, woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth, that is three woes, because of the three trumpets which were yet to be sounded. At the first of these three greatest woes, wee had briefly described the darke kingdome of Antichrist. At the second trumpet sounded, there was painted out the horrible destroying armie of the Turkes. These two being fulfilled, there remaineth but one which is the third. And therefore as it is sayd at the first of the three, one woe is past, and behold two woes will come after this: so at the next it is here saide, the second woe is past, and behold the third woe commeth anon. This third woe is the greatest woe of all woes, euen the last woe, that is to say, the woe of eternall iudgement and vengeance. This is here described at the sounding of the last trumpet. Here is then the day of iudgement, and some description of the things which follow that day both vpon the good, and vpon the bad. For this description, as wee shall see, deuideth it selfe into those two partes, that is to say, the ioyes of the good, and the torments of the wicked. The former two woes, that is, the kingdome of the Pope, and the kingdome of the Turke being much spent, we are now to waite for the great day: for as the holy Ghost sayth, *The third woe will come anon.* It is no time for men to liue now in securitie.

Then he sayth, *The seventh Angell blew the trumpet, and there were great voyces in heauen, &c.* The Angell did denounce a woe, and it is sayde, the third woe will come: and now at the sounding of the trumpet, here are voyces heard of triumphing ioy and gladnes. How doth this agree to a woe? Ye must note that the three great woes are denounced only against the inhabitants of the earth, the children of this world, euen the reprobate. Now the ioy which is here set forth is of another companie, euen of the blessed Angels, and of all the elect and redeemed of the Lord. For when the greatest woe of all beginneth vpon the devils, vpon Antichrist, and vpon all the wicked, then beginneth also the greatest ioy of the church, and of all the heavenly companie. How do the holy Angels and the Saints expresse the cause of their ioy? or what cause of ioy vtter they? Saint Iohn sayth, there were loud voyces heard, saying, *The kingdomes of this world are our Lordes, and his Christ, and he shall raigne for euermore.* Here is the cause of ioy expressed. Then all their ioy is in this, and for this, that the kingdome of God, and the Lord Jesus Christ is set vp, and shall stand for euermore, euen world without end. There is indeed full cause of triumphing and reioycing, for in this kingdome of God, and of his Christ, consisteth the glory of God, the glory and the ioy of all the elect.

therefore no maruell though there bee loud voyces of ioye and triumph, at the full setting vp of the same. But it may be said, doth not the Lord God raigne as king ouer all the world euen now? or did hee not euen then rule when Antichrist bare sway? Yea hath he not alwaies raigned? and is not the Lord Iesus lifted vp in glory at the right hand of God, & hath all power giuen vnto him in heauen and earth, and doth raigne as Lorde and king ouer all? How then is this applyed to the day of iudgement, as though the kingdome of God, and of his Christ, should then, and not before then, be set vp? To answer this, wee must note, that although the most high God of glory is king ouer all, and hath exalted his sonne vnto the highest maiestie, yet by his permission, Satan the prince of darkenes, with his Angels exercise a kingdome and a dominion in darknes, in vnrighteousnes, and sin, and beareth great sway in the world by his ministers and seruants the wicked and reprobate, and shall doe euen to the day of the generall iudgement. But at that day, the whole kingdome of Satan, of Antichrist, and of all the wicked enemies, shall bee quite and vtterly bearen down, no reliques, nor remnants of the same remayning. The deuils and the wicked shall all be cast into the prison of hell, and there be shut vp in darknes, & in euermore. They shall range no more abroad to molest the seruants of God, nor to worke wickednes vpon the earth. For we looke (as Saint Peter sayth) for new heauens, and a new earth, in which dwelleth righteousness, 2. Pet. 3. This is it which we are taught to pray for dayly, when we say, Let thy kingdome come. And to all that hate the power of the deuill, with the workes of darknes, and that loue the glory of God, and of his Christ, it is a most ioyful time to thinke vpon. The Lord Iesus Christ shal raigne (as the heavenly spirits do here pronounce) not for a thousand yeares vpon the earth, which is the error of the Chiliasstes, but for euermore: Euen so shall the blessednes of the saints be with their head and king world without end. For so long as God and his Christ shall raigne, so long shall the Church inioy true blessednes: and that is so long as neuer shall haue an ende.

Men are carefull about the things of this life, and an hundreth yeares seemeth a long time, but if our eyes could bee opened to behold the time, euen the eternitie & euermore continuance of the kingdome of Christ, it would make vs despise and set light by the time present, and the transitorie things which are in it, and to set our whole hart vpon this glorious kingdome which shall neuer decay or draw towards any end. Thinke often I pray ye, vpon these reioicing words of the holy Angels, the kingdomes of the world are our Lords, and his Christes, and hee shall raigne for euermore. Thus much for the triumphant ioye of the Angels. Now followeth the reioicing of the Church.

The 24. Elders doe represent all the chosen which are saued, both in the time of the law and of the Gospell. The number of twelue doubled, respecteth the twelue tribes, for the one: and the Church gathered by the Lambes twelue Apostles, for the other. These first doe fall downe vpon their faces and worship God. They do not worship one an other, they worship no Angell, but they all worship God. And yee shall neuer finde in the holy scriptures, that the true Church or any member thereof,

therof, doth worship any but God. For the diuine worship is peculiar to the most high God alone, who will not (as he sayth by the Prophet) giue his honour to any other. It is heinous sacriledge and robbery to giue away any part of it vnto creatures. The popish Synagogue the Church of Rome, doe worship Angels, and pray vnto them. The popish Synagogue do worship Saintes, and call vpon them, making them mediators of intercession. They do worship and call vpon the blessed Virgine, vpon the Apostles, and Martyrs. The popish Synagogue doe worship dead bones, and rotten reliques, yea euen the bones sometimes of wicked men, such as Thomas Becket. Finally, the popish Synagogue doe worship Idols of siluer and gold, of brasle, of wood, and of stone, which can neither goe nor see, and therefore indeed they worship deuils, as the holy Scriptures doe flatly charge all Idolaters: therefore the popish Synagogue are nothing like to this heavenly company, which worship none but God. Learne therefore out of the holy Scriptures, and take heed to what companie of worshippers yee ioine your selues. If yee ioine with them which worship God alone, there is plaine warrant enough in the liuely worde: If yee will ioine with them that make others Gods, (for what a man offereth diuine worship vnto, that hee maketh God) yee follow the wicked inuention of the flesh, and the diuelish suggestion of Satan, and the Lord in his word doth terribly threaten against the same. Keepe your selues chaste, bee pure worshippers of God, commit not spirituall whoredome with deuils.

It followeth, that they giue thanks and praise to God: *We giue thee thanks Lord God Almighty, (say they) which art, which wast, and which art to come, &c.* The Saintes receiue very great benefites at the day of iudgement, for it is the day of redemption vnto them: it is the day in which they beginne to enter into the possession of their full glory; thē they receiue their bodies. They cannot therefore but with vehement affection breake forth into thanksgiuing for the same. Such of Gods children, as now being clogged with the burthen of the flesh, are dull to giue thanks for their redemption, shall then with most quicke affection sound forth thanksgiuing and praise to God alone. Indeed we haue the promises of God which cannot lye, nor deceiue vs, that we shall be plucked out of miserie, and made partakers of his glory in eternall blessednes: but our nature is such, as that wee are most moued with the things present, which our senses doe apprehend. Let a man haue the promise and gift of some rich inheritance here in the worlde, which is to come a long time after, and it will moue him, but not so much as when he taketh the possession. The faithfull doe worship God, and giue him thanks while they bee here, but nothing as it shal be at the latter day. Then see with what tearmes they set forth God: *Lord God (say they) Almighty, which art, which wast, and which art to come.* They see now most cleerely, that God by his almighty power treadeth downe all the enemies, yea euen the strongest of them, and plucketh forth his redeemed out of their hands. They see in more perfect sort then while they liued here, that hee is God eternall, and vnchangeable, and shal continue the same for euermore: That he hath giuen the being vnto all creatures, and supporteth them by his mightie worde. These things they now see perfectly.

In the next words they render a reason of their thanks, saying, *For thou hast received thy great might, and hast obtained thy kingdom.* Is this the cause of their thanks? And had not the Lord alwaies his great might? and doth hee not alwayes raigne as king? The Lord hath alwaies retained the fulnes of his might, and shall haue no greater power at the latter day then he hath now. Also he raigenth as king ouer all: but as it was said before, he doth permit a kingdom & a power to the deuill, which when throweth downe, he is sayd then to receiue his great might, and to obtaine his kingdom. The receiuing then of his great might, is the exercising and putting forth of the same, for the ytter ouerthrow of all the enemies, and full deliuerance of the Church. While Satan and wicked men do beare such sway here in the worlde: while the godly are oppressed and iniured many waies: while death hath still dominion ouer their bodies, and they lie in the dust, subiect vnto basenes, vnto vile rottennes and corruption, where is the mightie power, and where is the kingdom of God? Doe they not seeme to be laid aside for the time? But when he sheweth his power, and beatech quite downe the power of Satan, and plucketh his chosen out of the iawes of death, then is he sayd to receiue his great might and kingdom.

And now marke well what cause the Church hath to giue him thanks for receiuing his mightie power & kingdom: for by this meanes she is brought to her perfect saluation and glory. Our full deliuerance, I say, doth stand in the mighty power of the Lord. And when he doth beate downe all his enemies and raigne, then blessed shall we be. When our Lord God shall raigne, let all reioyce and be glad, that bee of vpright heart, for we shall raigne with him. Hitherto appertaine all the exhortations in the Scriptures, which will vs to reioyce in his holy name. Then to conclude this point of this triumphant song of the Church: see how all saluation is ascribed to the mightie power of God: and how the Saints doe thanke him alone for it. It is written, as you know, saluation is of the Lord. And who giueth thanks for that which is his owne? If our works, our merites, or righteousnesses did saue vs, these thanks to God for his power and kingdom could not stand. Wee might in some sort thanke our selues: yea, wee might glory in our selues, and in our owne strength. But the true Church giueth thanks onely to God, and glorieth onely in his power and kingdom. Therefore the popish Synagogue which glorieth in her owne righteousness, is nothing like to the chaste spouse of Christ. O beloued, trust in the Lord, and in his glorious power, for he alone is our Saviour, and our redeemer.

Then it followeth: And the Gentiles were angrie, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be iudged, and that thou shouldest giue reward to thy seruants the Prophets, and to the Saints, and to them that feare thy name, both small and great. This is the latter part of the ioyfull and triumphant song of the Church. In the former, as we haue scene, they gaue thanks to God, that he had receiued his great might and kingdom: because by it, and in it, consisteth the felicitie of the chosen. And now comming to mention the wrath and vengeance which is to be poured forth vpon the wicked: they first doe say, the Gentiles were

were angrie. As if they should speake thus, the Gentiles, euen all the prophane enemies of thy Church, both forraine and domestical, haue had their time, in which they were angrie with thy people, and in their wrath did afflict and vex them very sore: And now the case is altered, and the time of thy wrath is come to punish them for the same their wicked crueltie. The speech is very fitte, seeing there hath beene no time, but the Church of Christ here in earth hath had very angrie enemies, and in their anger and furie, they flie vpon her, reuile and persecute her, and most cruelly murder her children. This wrath of the Gentiles, and bitter rage against the Church, which is most deare & pretious to the Lord, is most highly displeasing his heauenly Maiestie: and therefore though hee suffer them, and seeme to wincke at them, yet there is a time to declare his wrath vpon them, and that, as the elders say, is now come.

It is a strange thing to see how blind the world is: The Ministers of Antichrist, how angrie they be, and how they fret and rage at all those which loue and imbrace the pure doctrine of the most glorious Gospel of Iesus Christ? And how made they bee, that men will not reuerence the lawes and cursed decrees of Antichrist, and so together with them worship the beast? And in their anger, how cruelly they runne vpon yong and old, both men, women and children, sparing none, and murder them vpon heapes? Againe, the prophane worldlings, which take pleasure in the lusts of sin, & would gladly walk without rebuke in all vncleannes, how exceeding angrie be they, when the liuely cleere word is vttered which doth disclose and bewray them? And if they see any of the people imbrace the holy doctrine of God, and eschew vncleane waies, how their wrath is then inflamed, they could euen find in their hearts to beate out their braines? because the Lord letteth them alone, (I meane he doth not powre forth vpon them the full measure of his wrath) they imagine that they shall neuer come to any account for the same. But let men remember that which is here written, *The Gentiles were angrie*, that is, they had their time to shew their wrath: *and the time of thy wrath is come.* Men haue a number of excuses, to colour their wrath and furie against those which publish and professe the doctrine of Christ, they will say it is for their lewd and naughtie behaviour and euill manners: (as though they which can and doe make much of the most filthy vncleane persons bare any misliking to sinne) but they can not cloake matters before God, let them therefore take heed, that their anger bee not against the light, euen of a loue which they beare vnto darknes. And for vs, beloued, let vs the more patiently beare the anger of the Gentiles, seeing they haue but their time: and there is a time when the wrath of the Lord shall come vpon them for it. We were better to endure their anger, which is but for a time, then to vndergoe the wrath of Almighty God, which shall torment as a consuming fire, for euer and euer. Manie doe not consider well of this, but feare the wrath of men, more then the wrath of God. They see so many angrie at the gospel, and some of them of power, that they will professe it no further, then that they may kinde the wrath of none against them. Such and such will bee offended with vs, say they, they may worke vs great harme and displeasure, and why should wee displease and anger any? Nay, why will

wilt thou displease & anger the lord God, that thou fearest the wrath of man, & fearest not his wrath? Let vs learne here to be armed strongly, and euen to stand fast, euen fully perswaded, that if we wil eschew the dreadfull wrath and heauie displeasure of almightie God, we must make full account to endure the anger of the Gentiles. For this is the portion and lot of the Church, and of all her children, to beare the anger of the Gentiles.

The next words are: And the time of the dead that they should be iudged. The Angell in the tenth chapter did sweare, that time should be no more but in the dayes of the voice of the seuenth Angell, when he shall beginne to blow the trumpet. We see here how this agreeth with the same, that now the dead shall be iudged. Then they are deceiued which expound these things to be such as goe a little before the last iudgement. For when this trumpe shall sound, the dead shall be raised vp incorruptible: Christ with this commeth to iudge the quicke and the dead. As to this also those former things, the receiuing his great might and kingdome, and the time of his wrath doe agree. And what shall be done at this iudgement? The next words doe shew, that when they say, that thou maiest giue reward to thy seruants the Prophets, and to the Saints, and to all that feare thy name, both small and great: and that thou maiest destroy them, that destroy the earth. This yee see reacheth to both parts, to the reward of the godly, which shall receiue the crowne of glory, and to the rendring vengeance and destruction to the wicked, for all their wicked waies. The blessed ones which now shall raigine with the Lord in glory, are diuided into these three sorts, the prophets, the saints, & all y^e feare God, both small & great. No doubt men shall in their seuerall degrees, not of merite (because there is none in the works of man) but of the fruites of faith receiue the reward of glory. If a man sowe sparingly, he shall reape sparingly, and if he sowe plenteously, he shall reape plenteously, as Saint Paul telleth the Corinthians, 2. Cor. 9. vers. 9. Wee are called vpon to be rich in good workes, 1. Tim. 6. We are willed to make vs friends with the vnrighteous Mammon, Luk. 16. Our Sauour saith, *Whosoener shall giue vnto one of these little ones to drinke, a cup of colde water onely, in the name of a disciple, verily I say vnto ye, he shall not lose his rewards.* Math. 10. By Prophets are meant in a large signification, all that haue faithfully taught and instructed the Church in the holy doctrine of Christ, whether priests or prophets of old in time of the law, or apostles, prophets, Euangelists, pastors, & teachers in time of the gospel. All these, euen according to their faithfull seruice, and labours, shall receiue their reward. It is said in the Prophet Daniel, that they which haue taught other, shall shine as the firmament, Dan. 12. Great shall be the reward of glory vpon the faithfull, and true Prophets.

Then next it is said, He will giue reward to the Saints, and then to all that feare his name, both small and great. It is euident by the Epistles of Saint Paul, as also by diuers other Scriptures, that the true beleeuers are all of them called Saints: how is here then a distinction of Saints, from those that feare his name? for they say to the Saints, and to them that feare thy name. We must either take it thus, to the Saints, euen to all that feare thy name, seeing all that feare the Lord be Saints: or els these former

former are called Saints by an excellencie. For while they liued in the world, some haue farre excelled others in holines. But all that feare the Lord shall be rewarded, both the small and the great. This is a great spurre to pricke vs forward vnto al good workes, wherein we may serue the Lord, and glorifie his holy name. And as on the one side, here is ioyfull reward proclaimed to the good, so on the other side, here is destruction denounced to the euill: and shouldst (say they) destroy them, that destroy the earth.

The godly receiue their reward from the free mercie, and bountifull goodnesse of the Lord, not for any merit or desert of their owne: for how can any work done by man, merit or deserue eternall glorie? But the wicked and vngodly, the reprobate are punished and destroyed in eternall perdition, euen according as they haue deserued. And therefore it is sayd here, the Lord shall destroy them, that destroy: for they that destroy, deserue, and are worthie to be destroyed. But why are vngodly men sayd to destroy the earth? I answer, wickednes doth corrupt, and destroy. And as godly men by wholesome doctrine, sound aduise, and good example in life, as meanes, are sayd to saue others; which is a blessed thing: So euill men, with their vngodly opinions, euill perswasions, and wicked deedes, do corrupt and defile, and euen vtterly destroy many. If ye marke it, this is a most cursed thing, which yet many wicked men doe glorie in, that they can hinder all goodnesse, and draw many after them into euill. Woe bee to such, for as they doe destroy, so ye heare that they shall be destroyed. The Lord sendeth his holy word to be preached, which is the arme and power of God to saluation, drawing men out of the power of sinne, of death, and of the diuell. Thou opposest thy selfe against it, because thou canst not indure the light, thy workes being euill, thou railest vpon those that preach it, thou hatest such as professe it, and so warring for the diuell, thou destroyest the earth, and therefore thou shalt be destroyed. The Lord hath redeemed vs that we should serue him in holines and righteousness al the dayes of our life: thou doest not onely despise this, and walke in sinne thy selfe: but art a master, and a ringleader vnto all vices, yea euen a perswader and a setter on of others. For thou art not onely a foule swearer thy selfe, but doest euen deride him that will not sweare. Thou doest not content thy selfe with thine owne drunkenness, but hast a delight, and a sport, to make others drunken. Thou entisest to whoredome, to theft, and to a thousand vanities, thou destroyest the earth, and therefore most iustly thou shalt be destroyed.

Thus farre we haue seene the reward of the good, and the destruction of the bad expressed by words: now in the next verse they be both of them figured vnder figures. And the Temple of God was open in heauen (sayth S. Iohn) and there was seene in his Temple the arke of his couenant: and there followed lightnings, and voyces, and thundrings, and earthquake, and much haile. The faithfull are reconciled vnto God by Christ, and shall dwell with him in the heavenly kingdome of glorie for euermore: which is figured by this, that the Temple of God is open in heauen, and in the same Temple was seene the arke of his couenant. For by this

arke wee must note that our Lord Iesus is represented, euen the mediatour betweene God and man, in whom the couenant of reconciliation and peace is made and ratified. There shall be no such carnall things (as the holy Ghost speaketh in the Epistle to the Hebrues) in heauen: but the arke did figure Christ in the time of the law: and this booke setteth forth heauenly and spirituall things, by those same externall figures which were then vsed. Then he sayth, there followed lightnings, and voyces, and thundrings, and earthquake, and much haile. The faithfull being receiued into blisse, here is expressed the terrible wrath and vengeance of God sent downe vpon the reprobate. And all is here painted out vnder a most grievous tempest. For as the Prophet Dauid, Psal. 11. describeth the iudgement of God, that he will make it raine vpon the wicked snares, fire, and brimstone, and tempest, which shall be the portion of their cuppe: so here shall be such a tempest as neuer was seene, with lightnings and voyces of terrour, and thundrings, with earthquake, and much haile. Indeed there is nothing here in this world so terrible, as that it can fully represent the horreur of Gods wrath, which shall at the day of iudgement be powred forth vpon the damned: but some shadow thereof is resembled by these terrible things. Let vs feare the Lorde, and glorifie his holie name, that wee bee not found among those vpon whom this tempest shall light.



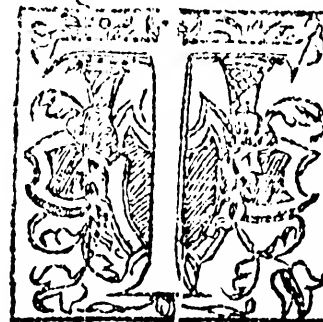
The 24. Sermon.

CHAP. 12.

- 1 And there appeared a great wonder in heauen, a woman clothed with the Sunne, and the Moone vnder her feet, and vpon her head a crowne of twelve starres.
- 2 And she was with child, and cried trauellling in birth, and pained, readie to be deliuered.
- 3 And there appeared another wonder in heauen, behold a great red dragon, hauing seven heads, and tenne hornes, and vpon his heads seven crownes.
- 4 And his taile drew the third part of the starres of heauen, and cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman, which was readie to be deliuered, to deuoure her child when she had brought it forth.
- 5 And she brought forth a manchild, which should rule all nations with a rod of yron, and her sonne was taken up to God and to his throne.

6 And

- 6 And the woman fled into the wildernes, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feede her there a thousand, two hundred, and threescore dayes.



He second vision of this prophetic, which beginneth at the fourth chapter, and continueth to the end of the eleuenth, being finished, we are come now to the third vision, which reacheth to the end of this booke, in which there bee sundrie particular visions. There be in this no new matters (for all things were contained in the booke sealed with seven seales, all which seales are opened, and the secrets disclosed, in briebe and darke manner) but here wee shall haue some of the same things, euen the chiefe and principall which haue been so brievely, and so darkly veiled in the opening of the seales, more largely and more cleerely for our better instruction, painted out. For we shall now see in goodly manner described by a vision, first the Church militant vpon earth, vnder the figure of a woman clothed with the Sunne, &c. Then is there a description of her chief enemy the diuell, who as a most vgly monster doth seeke to destroy the blessed seede, and so to deuoure her also, by dispossessing her of that eternall blessednes, of which she hath the promise. Then next follow the descriptions of the chiefe and principall instruments, which this monster the dragon, euen the diuell useth against her, which are described vnder the figures of a monstrous beast with seven heads and tenne hornes, and of a beast with two hornes like a lambe, whose dominion & tyrannie agaynst the Saints are set forth. Then doe follow the ruines and vtter ouerthrow of the power of these beasts, and the plagues vpon the malignant Church which doth worship them, with the condemnation of them all, that is to say, of both the beasts, and of them that take their part, and of the diuell. And lastly a most sweete and comfortable description doth follow of the victorie, of the glorie, and of the eternall felicitie of the true Church, after the finall destruction of all her enemies. These things are reueiled in sundrie particular visions, but may bee called all one. But before she come vnto this victorie and glorious triumph, she must encounter with those huge and vgly forenamed monsters, as wee shall see by their description.

Come now to the words: There appeared (sayth he) a great wonder in heauen, a woman clothed with the Sunne, &c. Here beginneth the description of the holie Catholike Church, which is called the Spouse of Christ, the Lambes wife. And that wee may haue our mindes prepared vnto a due regard and reuerend estimation of the whole matter, which is here handled, S. Iohn sayth, there appeared a great wonder in heauen. We are moued at great wonders, and he telleth that here is a great wonder shewed. Looke not then here for common matters, and for such as are but of small moment and little to be regarded: but for such indeede as are to be wondred at for their greatnes, and which for our profit and saluation, it standeth

standeth vs greatly vpon for to know. First this being (as none can deny) a description of the Church militant vpon earth, here ariseth a question: How is it that she appeareth in heaven, for this woman appeareth in heaven, and the Church militant is vpon the earth? The answer is plaine and easie enough to this. For we must vnderstand, that her birth is from heaven, she is borne of God, her inheritance is in heaven, where she shall raigne with Christ in glorie, she is but a stranger and a pilgrime, and that for a time vpon the earth. This is the cause that she appeareth in vision, not vpon the earth, but in heaven. This is a great and a wonderfull thing to consider, if wee could throughly way it. But the wonder is farre greater in the next words, namely, that she Church appeareth in the person, and vnder the figure of a woman, and hath such monstrous enemies. How shall a woman stand to fight against such horrible enemies, and preuaile? What is a woman to the cruell monster the dragon here painted out? What is a woman to those great monstrous beasts which follow in the next chapter, whom the world wondreth at and worshipping? How shall she fight against these? how shall she be in safetie, or how shall she stand? Is it not a wonder of wonders, that she is not vtterly swallowed vp, and quite destroyed? She hath indeede one which is on her side to vphold her, who is most mightie & inuincible, in power farre aboue al her enemies, otherwise she should be swallowed vp & vtterly deuoured, a thousand thousand times. The most glorious power of God, and of our Lord Iesus Christ, sheweth it selfe in preserving this feeble woman, and in giuing her victorie ouer so mightie enemies. All that haue eyes to see, must needs confesse that this is a very great wonder indeede. And let vs for our instruction learne, that wee being but as a weake woman in our selues, all our strength wherewith we be armed and made able to stand against the diuell and against Antichrist in the spirituall battaile, is from our Lord God. Wee are kept by faith, 1. Pet. 1. vers. 5. Our victorie is our faith, 1. Ioh. 5. vers. 4. Let vs also, as S. Paul willet in his Epistle to the Ephesians, put on the whole armour of God, otherwise wee are but as a weake woman before these huge enemies. Then it is sayd, that this woman is clothed with the Sunne, the Moone is vnder her feete, and on her head a crowne of twelue starres. Here is goodly attire: this is pretious and heavenly decking, farre aboue the rich and costly robes, and princely ornaments of the greatest Queenes that euer liued vpon the earth. Here is a glorious woman, and full of light: the brightnes of God is vpon her, she shineth pure and cleere, she is clothed with the righteousness, and with the innocencie and puritie of Iesus Christ, who is the sunne of righteousness, and therefore he sayth, she is clothed with the Sunne. O blessed woman: She treadeth vnder her feete things mutable and transitorie, euen the things of this world, which are fitly resembled by the Moone that doth alter & change, which he saith is vnder her feet. Her affectio is vpon heavenly things, euen vpon the glorie promised and prepared for her in the world to come, and in respect of the same, she treadeth vnder her feete, that is, she despiseth and setteth light by all the transitorie riches, glorie, pompe, and carnall pleasures of this world. She is crowned, for verely she is a great Queene, euen the spouse of the king of kings: and her crowne

is not of golde, or pretious stones, or pearles, or of any corruptible thing, such as Kings and Queenes do vse, but of an heavenly matter, euen of twelue bright stars: For she shall bee crowned with heavenly glory, and light which shall neuer faile. She is brought to the fruition of this heavenly glory, by the pure shining doctrine of the holy Apostles, and therefore it seemeth the number of twelue is vpon her crowne. This is a thing also of great wonder, that out of so base and miserable estate, yea euen from the bondage of corruption and thraldome of eternall damnation, into which all were cast downe, the Lord doth lift vp his Church into so exceeding high glory. And here I pray ye all to consider, and to take it as a cleere doctrine deliuered in this place, that so many as will be the true children of the church, they must put on Christ, they must despise this world, and all the vaine pompe and the glory thereof, with all riches and carnall pleasures, and as citizens of the heavenly citie, euen long after their countrie: And the word of God, euen the doctrine of the Apostles must be their crowne. In the next verse it is sayde, that the woman was with child, and so neere her time to bring forth, as that shee was in the paines of her trauaile to be deliuered. Here is a great matter to be noted.

It appeareth plainly by the fifth verse following, that the child which the woman trauaileth in paine withall to bring forth, is Christ Iesus the blessed seed of the woman, who was promised as the Sauour that should breake the serpents head. For there it is sayd of him, that he should rule all nations with a rod of Iron. And who is that but Christ the Sauour? Hee was promised vnto Adam, and Eue at the first in paradise, immediatly after their fall. This promise was renewed vnto the Patriarches, and vnto all the faithfull in the time of the law. The whole people of Israel waited for the comming of this Messias, which should vanquish the deuill and death. And albeit hee was borne but of one member of the Church, that is, of the blessed Virgin Marie, in whose wombe onely he tooke his flesh, yet may it be said that the whole Church, euen all the elect of God: which were before his comming, did euen trauaile with paine to bring him forth, they had such a longing, they had through faith in the promise so vehement and feruent a desire and expectation of his birth. And therefore he saith, that the woman, that is the whole Church, cryed trauailing in birth, and was pained, they brought him forth by faith. Thus far Saint Iohn hath proceeded in the description of the woman, which is euen now readie to bring forth her Sauour: now he painteth out that vgly foule monster her enemy the deuill, as he was resembled and shewed in the vision vnto him. And there appeared (saith he) an other wonder in heaven, behold a great red dragon, &c. Wee saw good cause why the woman appeared in heaven, although she be warring vpon the earth: but this may seeme a strange wonder, that the deuill appeareth in heaven. Hath this dragon any thing to doe there? hath he the power to enter into the heauens? Is not hell his place? what shall we say to this? I noted vnto yee before, that the woman hath her birth from heaven, she is borne of God and heaven is her countrie, there lieth her inheritance. I need not stand to proue these things, for who is it that will doubt of them, or call them into question? Now because the dragon seeketh to cast her quite downe from this her high dignitie and glorious life, and

vterly to deprive and to dispossesse her of that heavenly inheritance, he appeareth by vision also in heauen. It is to teach vs, that hee pursueth her euen thither, when he laboureth to cast her downe from that dignitie. For the whole practise of Satan is, to bring downe into condemnation in hell with himselfe, euen all the elect and chosen children of God if it were possible. Hee enuieth the felicitie of the Church, and would draw her downe into perdition: and so we see then why in vision he appeareth in heauen. It is not then that he hath any right, any interest or place in heauen: but that he pursueth the woman in some sort thither. Hee is a most enuious, a most hatefull and cruell enemy of ours.

And now let vs see what manner of one he is, what his disposition, qualities, and properties be. He is resembled by a dragon, which is a beast so fierce and cruell that he cannot be appeased. We doe all abhorre it, and euen as it were tremble at the name of a dragon: and therefore vnder this figure is painted out the most sauage monster of all, full of all dragonly felnes. He is said to bee a great one, and so the more terrible: for looke how much the greater, so much the more terrible is a dragon, huge in greatnes, very mightie and strong, and a dragon that is fell. Besides his greatnes, his colour doth also bewraye what is in him: for hee is all fierie red. He doth burne, yea hee is on a flame as it were with hatred and malice, both against God and man. Hee delighteth in nothing so much as in murder and crueltye, he is all bloudie. He is a murderer from the beginning (as our Sauour sayth) and abode not in the truth, Iohn 8. His bloudie and fiery nature seeketh nothing continually, but to destroy and murder both the soules and the bodies of men. And he doth destroy and swallow vp so many as God doth not blesse and keepe from him.

We see here plainly what the woman is to looke for at the hands of such an enemy: and we are continually to craue the blessing and protection of God. Is hee any way to be appeased or qualified? Is it good to obey his will? May there be any reconciliation, or any truce so much as for one hower had with him? But when as the holy scriptures doe teach, that there be great multitudes and armies of deuils which doe compasse vs about and seeke our endlesse destruction: How is it that he speaketh here but of one dragon, whom he afterward calleth the deuill and Satan? The answer vnto this is euident: namely, that this one dragon doth represent the whole kingdome of the deuils, euen the whole infernall power. If there be an head or a master deuill, yet all the rest doe ioyne in one. Yea they all of them so ioyne together in malice and mischief, as if they were but one, and not manie deuils. Their malice, their power, their craftines, and their indeuours, doe all concur. Our Sauour teacheth, that Satans kingdome is not deuided, Matth. 12. Then further, this dragon hath seuen heads, and ten hornes, and vpon his heads seuen crownes. Here is a wonderfull, and I may say, a most dreadfull description of his subtiltie, of his strength, and of his victories, which by his force and subtilties he hath obtained. He hath seuen heads, and marke well what that representeth, for as we vse to say commonly of a craftie man, hee hath a suble head: so the perfect number of seuen heads here do represent the fulnes of his subtilties and craftes. The

number

ber of seuen is vsed in the scripture for a perfect number to signifie many, and so by these seuen heads, are signified the manifold and sundry deepe sleights and subtilties of this horrible enemy, and as I sayd, euen the fulnes of them. He is most vglie and most foule in al things, and yet through sleight he can colour the matters that he dealeth in so farre, and with so great cunning as to transforme himselfe into the likenesse (as Saint Paul saith) of an angell of light, and make the things seeme good which he perswadeth. Without the speciall wisdom of God therefore to guide vs, he should out of doubt deceiue all; none, not euen the wisest should be able to espie out, and to auoide his subtilties. He hath ten hornes: and by hornes ye knowe right well that the Scripture euery where setteth forth, and resembleth strength, and power, and might. Then it is euident, that besides the manifold subtilties of this cruell dragon, he is of wonderful force and might: for ten is also a perfect number. They be mightie spirits the deuils and full of terrible power: For these ten hornes doe pretend so much. Wee all of vs doe vnderstand this, that strength can do much by it selfe, and subtiltie alone doth often preuaile to effect very great matters: what shall we thinke then, where such exceeding great strength resembled by tenne hornes, and so manifold subtilties as his seuen heads containe meete and are ioyned together? These doe indeed concur in this fierie dragon, the fierce and cruell enemy of mankind. And what effectes they haue wrought, is declared in the next words, when he saith, And vpon his heads seuen crownes. Who do vse to weare crownes I pray you but conquerours, which in deed get the victorie and doe raigne?

Now because the dragon by his subtilties especially hath gotten many victories, and hath seduced the nations of the worlde, euen to worship him in stead of God, and so hath brought them vnto eternall perdition, hee is crowned and hath rained ouer them as a king, and as a most mightie conquerour. And because his subtilties haue so often preuailed, all his heads are crowned. There is not one head that wanteth a crowne. This is that mightie tyrant, whome Saint Paul calleth the God of this world, who blindeth the eyes of the infidels, 2. Cor. 4. And whom the same Apostle calleth principalities, and powers, euen the rulers of the darknes of this world, and spirituall craftines in the high places. And Saint Peter calleth him a roaring Lion, Ephes. 6. 1. Pet. 1. 5. Indeed all his dominion is in falshood, in lyes, in error, in darknes, in superstition, in Idolatrie, and in all filthines of other wicked sinnes. As his subtiltie is very great for to seduce, so is hee mightie and strong in the corrupt heart of man to lead vnto all these. The light, the truth, the pure word of God in deed do vanquish him: and the spouse of Christ is armed therewith, with the spirituall sword, Ephes. 6. It is a very good thing for vs, that the holy gho doth thus paint him out, euen in this terrible manner, euen to raise vs vp from security, that we may seeke continually to God, to bee preserved by his gracious and mightie protection from this dragon. He destroyeth many thousands, and yet maketh them beleene he neuer commeth nigh them: hee holdeth them in such blindness and contempt of Gods word. He woundeth their soules to death with all abominable sinne. He worketh mightily in their hearts so faire that they obey his will.

and

and so honour him as their God, and yet they doe not perceiue it. If ye will be wise, be instant with the Lord God night and day, and let it bee your continuall prayer to be deliuered from him.

It is sayd further, that his taile drew the third part of the starres of heauen, and threw them downe to the earth. This is a maruailous thing, and which we may indeed greatly wonder at, that this monster the dragon is so huge and so great, that his taile reacheth vnto, and doth cast downe the third part of the starres of heauen? what is the bignesse of the whole bodie, and what is his strength that hath such a taile? Hereby I take it euident, that dragon representeth the whole bodie of all the deuils. How easily were he able to swallow vp the woman, if the mightie power of God did not keepe her? What is she in her selfe compared vnto him? Glory, honour, thanks, and praise, be to the most high God, which is greater and mightier then he, and doth so arme euen the least and the weakest of all his chosen, and maketh them so strong, that they vanquish and overcome this monster. And it is a glorious victorie, that weake flesh through the power of God is so mightie as to overcome him. But it may bee demaunded, what is meant by this, that his taile doth draw the third part of the starres of heauen, and cast them downe to the earth? How is it to be vnderstood? We know it is not to be taken literally, that the deuill with a very taile euer drew downe the starres themselves of the firmament, which doe shine vnto our bodily eyes: Wee must then take it mystically, and not as the letter soundeth. And ye see before by Christs owne words, when hee sayth, the seuen stars, are the seuen Angels of the seuen churches, that by stars are signified preachers of the gospell, because they must shine to the world with pure doctrine, like starres. A great part of them are by the deuils taile cast downe. They seemed which are thus cast downe, for a time to shine like starres of heauen, both by the light of heauenly doctrine, and also of vpright conuersation: but the deuill casting in his taile, that is, euen tempting them with ambition, with vaine glory, with couetousnes, and with other fleshly lustes and earthly desires, pulleth them downe from their brightnes. They become euen like the rest of the worldlings, which are called the inhabitants of the earth, which he sheweth when he sayth, the dragon doth cast them to the earth. This place doth instruct vs all, for this is declared to the end that we may not be astonished, nor stumble at it as at a strange matter, when wee see many learned men, that haue zealously preached the gospel, and were famous, that in continuance of time doe become euen meere worldlings, scarce retaining so much as any little shew either of zeale for to set forth the trueth, or yet of godlie conuersation: all graces doe wither in them. This propheticie must needs be true in ages and times. The dragon fighteth against the woman very fiercely, and althogh he can not cast downe the least of Gods elect, for Christ sayth, the father gaue them me is stronger then all, and none can take them out of his hands, so yet hee preuaileth against multitudes which are in the visible Church, and did seeme for a time to be very good Christiāns, zealous of good works. And hee pulleth them downe, for if he draw down with his taile so many learned teachers, and make mocke among them, what heapes of others which are but common professors

fors thinke ye, he doth overcome? Here is then a very good lesson for al the preachers and ministers of the Gospell, yea euen a warning for them (if men will be warned) to take heed, that they be not of those starres which the dragons taile shal cast downe. He striketh in his taile continually among vs, and tempteth with couetousnes and ambition. It standeth vs vpon to feare and to tremble, and to depend vpon the Lord with humble supplication and prayer. For this place ought to moue vs to crie continually, Lord Iesus preferue thy ministers: because doubtles, as hee preuaileth against many of the teachers, so his taile is walking, and he doth most furiously assault vs all: yea we shall all be cast to the earth, if the Lord Iesus doe not preferue and keepe vs.

Then it is sayd further, that the dragon stood before the woman, which was readie to be deliuered, to deuoure her child, when she had brought it forth. This is a most wicked practise, this is a most dangerous attempt, that he watcheth so narrowly to deuoure the blessed seede, euen the Saviour of the world, so soone as euer he should be borne. This was the readie way to ouerthrow the woman also: for all the health and felicitie and saluation of the Church, dependeth wholly and altogether vpon the Messias. If he should faile, all were lost. The time of his birth foretold by Daniel the Prophet was now come. And marke the subtil practise of Satan, who watcheth when and where he should be borne, and stirreth vp Herod the king subtilly to seeke him out by the wise men, Matt. 2. that he might kill him. And when he did not preuaile by one means (that is, the wise men being warned of God, returned home another way) he attempted another: for he sent and slew all the young children in Bethlehem, and round about in the borders thereof, from two yeares old and vnder, thinking by that meanes to kill Christ among them. O monstrous cruell dragon, which hath the tyrants of the world at his becke to command! For indeed he wrought by such wicked rulers against Christ, and by such he worketh continually against the whole Church of God. Well, she bringeth forth, and she bringeth forth a manchild, and such an one, as should haue al the nations of the earth for his possession, and ouer whom as a most mightie king, he should raigne and rule with an yron scepter. This may in some sort be applied to all the faithfull, in as much as they shall raigne with the Lord Iesus their head, but most fitly it is here to be vnderstood of Christ himselfe, euen as the second Psalme doth shew. This infant is the king of all kings. This babe is he which of old was promised by the Prophets, that with his kingly power was to tread downe Satan and his kingdome, and to deliuer the prisoners and captiues out of his hands. No marueile therefore, though the dragon seeke to deuoure him so soone as he should be borne. But we shall see how he misseth of his purpose, for the child is taken vp to God, and to his throne, he is set farre aboue the reach of the dragon, he cannot deuoure him. After a sort indeede the babe so soone as he was borne, was taken vp to God, and to his throne, though he remained still vpon the earth, when the Lord gaue warning to the wisemen, not to returne backe againe to Herod, and when he willed Ioseph to flye into Egypt, and when by his most mightie arme he kept him continually from all perill, Satan seeking all wayes and meanes for to destroy

destroy him. For the preferuation of Christ while hee was an infant, and likewise while he entred into his office, was as miraculous, as if he had been taken vp into heauen, euen to the throne of God and kept there. Thus the infant is set in safetie from the iawes of this foule greedie dragon, and after his passion he ascended in deede vp to the throne of God in heauen: but what becommeth of the woman, how shall she doe, how is she provided for, or how shall she escape him? Wee shall see, that she is also well provided for. It is sayd, that she fled into the wilderness. Behold here how Satans rage was such, that when he could not deuoure the child, then he attempted some other way vtterly to roote out, and to destroy the woman. But she escapeth him also: for she hath power giuen her to flye away from him into the wilderness. This plainly sheweth what he purposed: for if hee fought not vtterly to swallow her vp, why fled she away from his presence? But what way is this to bee vnderstood? what reason is here for vs to thinke that she could thus escape? Are not the diuels as swift to flye after, as she was to haste and to remoue her selfe out of their sight? Can flesh and bloud make quicker speede then those nimble spirits? I will tell ye, we must vnderstand this flight of the woman from the presence of the dragon, to haue bin then when the Lord did spread his Church into wast, wide, and wild barren places, as it were into the wilderness. I wil shew ye more plainly, how this flight is to be vnderstood. When the Church began to increase, after our Sauour had taught while he liued vpon earth, and then his Apostles after his ascension, (and had gathered a right excellent and famous Church) Satan was in a marvellous rage: and that Church being then in a narrow compasse, euen the most of them that professed Christ in that one citie Ierusalem, he attempted as it were to spread his net ouer them, and to roote them out all at once, and so to deuoure the woman. And therefore as wee reade, Act. 3. after the stoning of Steuen, he raised vp a great persecution: and then hee had Saul in his campe, as a most cruell persecutor, who thought hee should doe high seruice to God, if he could roote them out all. The high priests, the princes of the Jewes, the Pharisees, & doctours of the law, were all so inflamed in wrath against the Church, that they meant to destroy all that should confesse Christ Iesus. And this the dragon led them into by his subtiltie, though they did not perceiue so much, but seemed to do it in zeale of the law. But how shall we vnderstand this, that he sayth the woman fled into the wilderness? What is this wilderness whither she fled from the presence of the dragon? Doubtes, the heathen countries might very well be called, and so they are called in the Prophets, the wilderness. When God separated the Jewes to be his onely people, and suffered the Gentiles to walke in their owne vanities, what could they bee but a wilderness? He gaue his word to the Israelites by Moses and the Prophets, and so they were planted, and dressed as his vineyard, as the Lord calleth them, Esay. 5. They were, as S. Paul also speaketh, the Lords husbandrie, 1. Cor. 3. There was plowing, and sowing, planting and watering among them, by the Lords labourers, the priests and prophets: there were some fruites brought forth. The Gentiles in the meane time, euen all other the great and mightie nations and kingdomes of the world, lay desolate and barren

euen

euen as a wilderness: no dressing there, no tilling, no fruite, but all couered with thornes. Into this wilderness then the woman flyeth from the furie of the dragon. For at the persecution raised when Steuen was stoned, as we reade Act. chap. the 8. the Disciples were scattered, as ye may there see, into diuers nations, and countries of the Gentiles. They were before as it were penned vp in a narrow corner in Iudea, but now they are scattered and dispersed farre and neere among the heathen. Thus doth she escape from the dragon. But how durst the woman attempt to flye into the wilderness? how did she know she should be safe there? I answer, that she had the speciall direction of God: for it is sayd, where she hath a place prepared of God. The woman then dooth nothing by her owne strength, nor by her owne wit: but by the hand and power of the Lord, and by the speciall wisdom of his spirit, she flyeth to her place assigned. Those worthie seruants of the Lord which fled from Ierusalem, being persecuted there, & preached the Gospel in farre countries, did it not rashly, nor of their owne head. For (as ye see) God had prepared her place whither she should flye. But now it might be sayd, how shall she liue in the wilderness? how shall she doe for sustenance? If one haue neuer so safe a place for defence in a wilderness, and haue nothing to feede vpon, what is he the better? There is no tilling, nor sowing, nor planting, there groweth no corne, there is nothing to bee had either for foode or raiment: how then shall the Church doe in the wilderness? Marke what followeth, and ye shall vnderstand, that God doth not onely prepare a place for her in the wilderness, but it is added, where they should feed her, a thousand two hundred, and threescore daies. Then the Lord God doth also send vnto her, and see that she shall lacke no food while she is in the desert.

When the great famine was in Israel, in the dayes of Elias, wee reade, that the Lord sent the rauen with bread and flesh morning and euening vnto Elias, wher he lay hid where Ahab should not finde him. When the children of Israel came forth of the land of Egypt, they were led in the wilderness fourtie yeares, as Moses reporteth. They had neither feede time, nor haruest, and yet they were fed. He fed them from heauen with Manna. And so as the Psalmist sayth, man did eate the bread of Angels. It was not the bread of y^e bakers, but the bread of Angels, that is, such as God gaue to them by the ministrie of Angels. So now the Church flyeth into the wilderness, but God sendeth vnto her those which shall feede her, and nourish her plentifully. Now the Lord sendeth forth into all places of the wilderness, euen among the rude sauage people of the Gentiles, his faithfull ministers, well furnished. Such as our Sauour compareth to householders that bring forth of their treasures with all store of heauenly, and spirituall foode things new and old, Matth. 13. vers. 52. Yea euen from among those which fought for the dragon, to destroy the woman, and which caused her to flye into the wilderness, the Lord plucked out one speciall chosen instrument, euen Paul, whom he sent after her, with exceeding abundance and plentie of foode to nourish her. Happie are they whom God doth feede, we may safely depend vpon him. His store neuer faileth, and if they be in the wilderness, he will send vnto them, he neuer wanteth

Q

meane

meanes. Hebr. 13. And wee haue his promise, that hee will neuer leaue vs nor forsake vs.

Thus wee see how by the prouidence of almightie God, the woman escapeth the daunger of the dragon, and the perill also of famine. The dragon thought vtterly to roote her out, that she might neuer after bring forth any children to God: but the Lord dooth protect her, and multiplieth her children abundantly in the wilderness. Great multitudes of sonnes and daughters she bringeth forth, and nourisheth vp, among the Gentiles. The dragon and all the cruell tyrants are thus by the wisdom of God disappoynted. God doth often turne the furie of his enemies to the enlargement of his Church. Let vs not then faint, nor despaire when wee see all on an vpror against the faithfull Christians, and such strength and terror bent, as if all should downe, this woman shall neuer bee overcome by the dragon, nor by all that he is able to make. Blessed is she, blessed are all her children. Wee haue now in the last place the time set forth, that is, how long they shall feede her in the wilderness, euen a thousand two hundred, and threescore dayes. This is the same number of dayes, that hee sayd in the former chapter, his two witnesses should prophesie. Reckoning thirtie dayes to the moneth, it ariseth vnto two and fourtie moneths, in which he sayd, the Gentiles should tread vnder foote the holy citie: and two and fourtie moneths make three yeres and an halfe. And therefore hee sayth afterward in this chapter, that the woman fled into the wilderness, vnto her place where she is fed, a time, times, and halfe a time. All these times of dayes, and moneths, and yeres meeting in one, the Papists, as wee noted before, will needes vnderstand not mystically, but litterally for the space of three yeres and an halfe, as wee in common vse doe take yeres. And thereupon they inferre, that Antichrist shal raigne but three yeres and an halfe: but the Pope hath raigned diuers hundred yeres (say they) and then cannot he be Antichrist. If they will needes take it literally, then let them shew, how the Church in all countries of the world, shall for those three yeres and an halfe bee fed by two men. The Church shal be fed in the wilderness, and the two witnesses shall feed her all that time of three yeres and an halfe, for so long they prophesie, and so long the woman is fed in the wilderness. Can two men be in all countries at once? If they will say there shall bee more then two, then according to the letter the things are vnperfectly set downe. For those that prophesie so long, are they which all that while doe feede the Church. The two witnesses shall feede her in the wilderness, that is, in all nations of the world, and must needes therefore be more then two. Euen so the certaine number of dayes, is put for a number indefinite, euen for the whole time that the Church shall be persecuted by the dragon, and not for three yeres and an halfe. Let no man thinke this strange: for can any be so foolish as to imagine, that of every one of the twelue tribes of Israel there should bee saued iust twelue thousand? But of this no further.



The 25. Sermon.

CHAP. 12.

- 7 *And there was a battell in heauen, Michael and his Angels fought against the Dragon, and the Dragon and his Angels fought:*
- 8 *But they preuailed not, neither was their place found any more in heauen.*
- 9 *And the great Dragon was cast forth, that old serpent called the deuill, and Satan, which seduceth the whole world: hee was cast into the earth, and his Angels were cast out with him.*
- 10 *And I heard a great voice in heauen, saying, Now is saluation wrought, and the strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: because the accuser of our brethren is cast downe, which accused them before our God, day and night.*
- 11 *And they ouercame him by the blood of the Lambe, and by the word of their testimonie, and they loved not their liues, euen vnto the death.*
- 12 *Therefore reioyce ye heauens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe be to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea, for the deuill is come downe to you, which hath great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time.*



In the former part of this chapter, wee had first the description of the true Church: and then next we had figured out her great enemy the deuill, and how he endeouored and waited to destroy the blessed seed euen Iesus Christ so soone as hee should be borne, and so to take away the saluation of the Church: and missing thereof, hee sought to roote out of the earth all that should bee found to confesse his holy name. Christ is taken vp to the throne of God, out of the reach of the dragon, hee cannot destroy him being from his birth miraculously protected, and after hee had finished all things, ascending vp into heauen. The Church also is so provided for by flight into the wilderness, that hee can not vtterly destroy her from the earth. These things we had in the former verses. In this part which I haue now read, here is another thing set forth, which is the chiefe and principall matter of all, wherein our whole ioy and comforte doth rest: and that is, how Christ ouercometh. Here therefore the dragon, as it was promised, the seed of the woman shall breake the serpents head. Here therefore wee shall see a great battell fought betwene him and Christ, in which the dragon is overcome: yea all the faithfull o-

uercome him by the blood of Christ. These be high and excellent things, yea euen the highest, which we are with great ioy, and with great attention to giue care vnto. Let vs now come vnto it.

And there was (saith hee) *a battell in heauen.* The place is named first where this battell was fought to be heauen. Did not Iesus Christ fight this battell vpon the earth? Did the diuell lead his armie vp into heauen and fight there? Did hee not spoyle (I meane the Lord Iesus) principalities, and powers, and triumph ouer them in his crosse? Surely he ouercame the deuill by his death vpon the crosse. If then this battell were fought vpon earth, how is it said here, that the battell was in heauen? could it be in heauen, and yet fought in earth? For answer vnto this, wee must consider that which I noted vnto ye before, namely, why the dragon appeared in heauen, not that he had any place, or right, or power, or entrance there, but because the woman is from heauen, her inheritance is in the heauens, and the dragon would cast her downe from it. Then yee may see that the reason why hee appeareth in vision in heauen, and why he is said to fight in heauen, is all one, euen this the battell is about heauenly things, he would plucke downe the woman from thence, from euerlasting glory into eternall miserie. Thus much concerning the place.

Then next here are named the captaines on both parts in this battell, together with their armies. Michael and his Angels on the one side for the Church, and the dragon and his Angels on the other side against the Church. Here is then the ioyning of the battell, they both fight, yea they all fight on both sides, both the captaines and their armies. Michael is the captaine on the best part, and hee is Iesus Christ. This name is giuen him in the tenth chapter of Daniel, where hee is called the first of the chiefe princes: because he is the head of Angels, who are the chiefe princes, being as the blessed apostle Saint Paul calleth them, principalities, mights, thrones, and dominations. In the twelfth chapter of Daniel, hee is called Michael the great, or the greatest prince. The word is an hebrue name, compounded of three words, which consist every one but of one sillable, which are these, Mi, cha, and el. Mi, signifieth who or which, cha, equall or like, el, the strong God: Michael then signifieth he which is equall with God. And wee are taught that Iesus Christ touching his Godhood is equall with the father. For Saint Paul (as ye know the place in his epistle to the Philippians) saith, that Christ being in the shape of God, thought it no robbery to be equall with God. Then this Michael is Iesus, for hee is equall with God. Here may now a question be moued, as thus: Did not this Michael only ouercome the dragon? Is there any other power besides the power of our Lord Iesus, which hath vanquished Satan? If not, howe is it sayde, that Michael and his Angels fought against the dragon? This is easily answered, that howsoeuer Michael hath his Angels that doe fight, yet he alone hath the power which ouercommeth the deuill: for they all fight in his name, and in his power. Yea to speake more properly, they be but the ministers and instruments of his power. They bee then ioyned with him in this battell, not that they fight by their owne strength, but because they be his ministers.

Now

Now besides the heauenly spirites which are not to be excluded, the blessed Apostles, and other ministers of the Gospel whom the Lord raised vp, were the Angels of Michael. These fought and doe fight against the dragon, when they deliuer forth the light of the heauenly truth: when they teach the true worship of God, and beate downe all false worship which is in Idolatrie and error. Yea when they lay open the power of Iesus Christ, and his saving health: Downe goeth Satan and his kingdome euen by these. So then, when Peter, and Paul, and all other holy seruants of God, euen as the Angels of this most mightie prince Michael, do fight against the dragon and against his Angels, and ouercome them: they fight not in any power of their owne, neither doe they ouercome by any might of their owne, but they fight and ouercome only in the strength and power of their captaine. This may teach vs, that it is not because Christ needed any helpe, that his Angels doe fight with him: neither is it to shewe that Satans power is subdued by any other might then by his alone. All that fight against the deuill and his angels, and ouercome, fight with the power of Christ. Thus much may suffice for the answering of that question.

Come now to the other part, The dragon and his Angels fought. This great tyrant hauing obtained a kingdome, is very loth to haue it pulled downe or diminished, yea he fighteth and endeoureth not onely to vphold that he had, but also to enlarge his dominion, yea euen so farre if it were possible, as vtterly to pull downe the kingdome of God. Here is fighting then for two kingdomes, euen betweene two great princes, the prince of darknes, and the king of glory. The Lord of hosts, euen the Lord strong and mightie in battell, which is the king of glory, Psalm. 24. will breake downe the tyrannous power and kingdome of the dragon, and set vp the kingdome of grace, and saluation, and from hence ariseth the battell. But who are the dragons Angels which doe fight for him? Shall wee take the dragon to bee but one deuill, euen the chiefe, whome the Pharisees called Beelzebub, and all the rest of the deuils to bee his Angels? Or as the papistes say, this great dragon is Lucifer, for so they call the prince of the deuils, because in the 14. chapter of Esay, ver. 12. it is said, how art thou fallen from heauen Lucifer? which is spoken of the kingdome of Babel, and they ignorantly apply it to the deuill. For the king of Babel is compared for the brightnes of his glory, to the morning starre, which is called Lucifer. It may bee there is one deuill chiefe as king ouer all the rest, but I doe not yet see how it is cleerely proued by the holy scriptures. I know the vanitie of some is such, that they doe not onely belecue that there is (as I sayd) one deuill as king ouer all the rest, which I will not affirme nor denie, but also beleue the conuers which set forth that according to the governments here among men, there be also among the deuils, vnder the chiefe deuill, Princes, Dukes, Earles, and great captaines which haue their armies vnder them. If the holy word of God hath taught no such thing, then who hath taught it but the father of lies? But if any man shall reply, and say it is cleere by this place, that there is one prince of the deuils, and all the rest be called his Angels. And likewise, Math. 25. Goe ye cursed into euerlasting fire which is prepared for the deuill and his angels. I say as I did before, I doe not de-

nie, as I doe not affirme, but that one deuill may bee the chiefe, and as the prince, but yet I doe not see, but that rather by this dragon the kingdome of deuils is represented, and that if there be seuerall orders or degrees, because Saint Paul calleth them principalities, and powers, and the rulers of the darknesse of this world, Ephe. 6. yet they may be all included in this dragon. Who then will some say, be the angels of the dragon which here doe fight? It is no absurditie to call particular diuels the Angels of the dragon, howsoeuer they bee all figured by him, seeing they all fight to maintaine and hold vp one kingdome. And moreover by the Angels of the dragon, are not onely diuels vnderstood, but also tyrants, false teachers, corrupters of the truth, and heretikes: for all these do fight for to vphold the power and kingdome of the dragon. As Christ and his Angels fight on the one part, so these with the dragon fight against him, on the other part.

It followeth, that the dragon and his Angels preuailed not, neither was their place found any more in heauen. This may seeme to bee but halfe a comfort, that he saith, they preuailed not: for a power sometime doth not preuaile, and yet is not overcome, nor diminished. Doth Satan goe away, and his Angels from this battell onely not preuailling? Are they not subdued and vanquished? Yes, that is our of question, that our mighty prince hath broken or crushed the head of the serpent. He triumphed in his crosse ouer principalities, and powers. Satan cometh down from heauen speedily: As ye know how our Sauour speaketh in the gospell, I saw Satan fall downe from heauen like lightning. They preuailed not, not onely in oppugning the whole Church, but also in not retaining that power which they had. For hauing seduced the large and mightie kingdoms of the world, insomuch that the deuils by the Gentiles were worshipped as Gods; now Christ finishing the blessed worke of redemption so long before promised to the fathers; and now the pure light of the glorious gospell shining into the hearts of Gods chosen in all places, great multitudes were translated out of darknesse into the kingdome of light. Now is not the dragon able to plucke out of the handes of Christ, so much as one soule of his elect: and therefore the conquest ouer him is great. But that which followeth seemeth somewhat darke; namely, that he sayth, their place was found no more in heauen. Had the deuils any place in heauen after they were become diuels? had they place in heauen till Christ suffered? Nay we are taught that they were cast downe from heauen when they sinned, 2. Pet. 2. By this is meant that they could no longer impugne or assault the Church touching her blessed estate in the heuens, with any hope to dispossesse her. Satan and his angels had place in heauen only to fight against the chosen, and now the same is quite taken away from them at the comming and death of the Lord Iesus. If any will say, he tempteth all the elect stil as he did before; he seeketh to cast them downe from heauen into the gulfe of hell as he did before: And moreover, it may be sayd truly, that hee could neuer from the beginning of the world pluck downe one of Gods elect. What difference is there then? why is it more sayd, that his place is found no more there? True it is that he could neuer disinherit the Church, nor plucke downe into eternall destruction so much as one of her true children, and so in that respect there can appeare

no difference at all: But yet wee must consider that because the battaile is now fought, and all things before promised are now finished by the death and resurrection of Christ, the victorie of Christ and his Church is ascribed to this time, that now Satan is cast down. Again, whereas this huge monster, partly by his strength, and partly by his craftines, had long time preuailed, and therby was made so bold that euery way hee assailed Christ Iesus himselfe: now hee feeleth that he is overcome, and that there remaineth no hope for him euer to assaile againe in battaile, either the Sauour himselfe, or the saluation of the Church. Their place in that respect is found no more in heauen. Where is their place then found? for they be not quite put downe as yet from fighting, they haue a place, they be not yet quite dispossessed of their kingdome?

It is expressed in the next verse, that they be cast forth into the earth, out of heauen then into the earth. Not vtterly put downe then (as I saide) from their kingdome, nor from fighting, but cast out from fighting any more in heauen, to fight in y^e earth. Of this we shal speak more anon, but first touching the speeches which are to set out the dragon. The great dragon (saith Saint Iohn) was cast forth, called the deuill and Satan, which seduceth the whole world, &c. looke vpon the words, hee is a dragon fierce and fell: He is a very great one, and of wonderfull power: He is that old serpent, and therefore not onely subtil, but through long experience wonderfull deepe in manifold crafts and sleights. Hee is called the deuill, that is, a false accuser by his calumniationes. He is called Satan, which is an aduersarie, burning with hatred against God and man. Hee hath with his craft and subtiltie preuailed and seduced the whole world, (only those few excepted which the Lord hath chosen out of the world) and yet in this battell he is overcome and cast forth. For what is he for all his fiercenes, strength, and subtilties, when he encountreth with Christ? for he is Michael, equall or like to the strong God. Indeed yee may well perceiue that al we are nothing to this vgly monster, he could easily swallow vs vp: but there is one on our side, euen our redeemer who is too hard for him, and hath cast him forth, he hath cast him into the earth, and his angels with him. Well then come, he is not yet cast downe into hell and shut vp there. Hee is cast but into the earth, he is not spoyled of all power, but vpon earth he reneweth the battell, and fighteth. And the Church is and hath beene vpon the earth. Very true, & he fighteth against her vpon the earth, he tempteth her children, he persecuteth them with slaunders, and with all kinde of cruell torments: but her saluation is ratified and sealed vp, and so hee can not fight against her in heauen. Hee hath then some power left to fight withall against the Church in earth, to vex and afflict her in this worlde, but hurt her estate in heauen, nor dispossesse her hee cannot, being spoyled of all that power, neither remaineth in him any hope thereof. Again hee hath his power, his kingdome, and dominion remaining whole still in the earth, that is, ouer the reprobate and wicked worldlings. He is cast forth and his angels out of heauen, but not from amongst them. They be his subiects, they be his vassals, they honor him by doing his will.

Thus farre then we see his kingdome doth yet continue after this great battaile:

and shall continue to the great day, that is, the day of iudgement. But hath not the Lord Iesus fully overcome him? hath he not fully trode downe his aduersaries? or did hee want might for to doe it? He wanted no might euen at once vtterly to tread them downe all, and to leaue them no power. The worke which he wrought was not in it selfe vnperfect, either for the full deliuerance of his chosen, or for the vtter ouerthrow of all his enemies: but it pleaseth God in his heauenly wisdom, that this power should not shew forth it selfe at once, but by degrees, and in some measure for the time, and then perfectly to take effect when all the dead shall be raised vp. Then let vs not be discouraged, that the dragon after this battaile fought, retaineth still a kingdome, and great power, and doth still muster his bands, and armies, and doth fight. He cannot fight any more (as wee haue seene) in heauen, and that which he retaineth of his power in earth, is but by permission for a time: for Christ at the latter day (as Paul sheweth, 1. Cor. 15.) will put downe all rule and authoritie, and shall haue all his enemies made his footstoole. Thus fare touching the battaile.

Now as it hath been the manner of old when any great battaile was fought, that the side which preuailed would sing a song of victorie, and set forth the praise of the conquerors: As ye may see how in such a song Moses, and the children of Israel, magnified the Lord God as the most strong and mightie warriour, when he had ouerthrowne Pharaoh and his host in the red sea, Exod. 15. Also wee reade how Debora in the booke of Iudges, after the great victorie gotten ouer Sisera, made a song, in which she setteth forth the praise of the conquerors, Iudg. 5. The Lord is magnified, and the instruments, euen her selfe, and Baruck, and Iael the woman which draue the naile into the head of Sisera, and likewise such of the children of Israel in their tribes as behaued themselves valiantly. And we reade also that when David had slaine Goliath, and the victorie was gotten ouer the armie of the Philistines, the women came forth and did sing, that Saul had slaine his thousand, and David his tenne thousand, 1. Sam. 18. These were songs of victorie: this was the manner to extoll the conquerors. So here, when the dragon and his angels are overcome, there is a ioyful song of victorie, which S. Iohn heareth vttered with a loude voyce from heauen. This is indeede a most excellent song, in which first the kingdome and power of God, and of his Christ, are magnified for overcoming the dragon, then the glorious victorie which the Church hath ouer him through Christ. I hardly, there is a calling vpon the heauens and vpon all that dwell in them, to reioyce for this glorious victorie. And lastly, woe is proclaimed to the reprobate, which receiue no good by the same victorie, but through their owne corruption, turne it to their further destruction.

Touching the first of these, wee see it is sayd, now is saluation wrought, and the strength, and the kingdome of our God, and the power of his Christ. There is nothing darke or difficult in these words: but as ye see the praise of God and of his Christ are sounded forth, in that the most high power of God, and his kingdome, hath shewed it selfe in Christ, by vanquishing the dragon, and thereby working and ratifying the saluation of the Church, that it can neuer be shaken. Marke well

(I pray you) how it is sayd, that saluation is wrought in heauen, and then the kingdome of God, and the power of his Christ are annexed. For hereby we are taught, that the saluation of the Church is wrought onely by the power of God in Christ, and wholly dependeth vpon the same. Here is no part ascribed to the Angels, nor to any other creature, but all wholly vnto God and his Christ. It is the kingdome and power of God in his sonne, and not the kingdome of any creature in which the saluation of the elect consisteth. We must ascribe vnto God and his Christ, all the glorie and praise thereof. It pleaseth God indeede, to vse both the ministrie of men and Angels in working this saluation, yet they doe nothing but in and by his strength: Then let vs note here that which wee spake of before, namely, how the dragon is cast forth from heauen, that is, wherein his power to fight did consist, and how it is taken away. For the words of this song doe expresse it, when they say, because the accuser of our brethren is cast forth, which accused them before God day and night. This dragon did overcome our first parents Adam and Eue, and brought them into the guiltines of sinne: yea all their posteritie are of necessity borne from them vncleane sinners. Then is the iustice of God such that where there is the guiltines of sinne, there is damnation. Al then being guiltie, the dragon doth stand before God night and day, and requireth and iudgeth euen by the iustice of God to haue all damned in hell for euer. Herein then stood his power against all: and as vnder a certaine right herein he fighteth: and the Lord God can not deny iustice and right, because he cannot deny himselfe. How is the dragon then cast forth from this? Thus he is cast forth, the Lord Iesus is borne, euen Michael the most mightie prince. He taketh all the sinnes and guiltines of his people vpon him, euen to beare them in his bodie vpon the tree. Hee suffereth all the wrath and torments due for the same, so that with his owne blood he washeth the whole Church, and maketh her cleane from all spot. Then she being thus iustified and clothed in Christ with perfect holines and puritie, the diuell can accue her no longer, nor lay any thing iustly to her charge. All his right and power against the elect is taken away: and so his place is found no more in heauen. This is it which S. Paul glorieth of, Rom. 8. Who shal lay any thing to the charge of Gods chosen? It is God that iustificieth (sayth he) who is he that condemneth? It is Christ which dyed, yea rather which is raised againe, which is also at the right hand of God, and maketh intercession for vs. Who then shall separate vs, from the loue of Christ? Behold then, beloued, the dragon cast forth, because he can no more lay any guiltines of sinne to our charge. Behold our saluation ratified in the death and resurrection of Christ. Behold the kingdome and might of God, and of his Christ herein, and let vs ascribe all glorie, and praise, and honour, onely to him which indeed hath washed vs from the guiltines of our sinnes, and made vs so perfectly pure, that the diuell can lay nothing to our charge. This is the first part of the triumphant song, proclaiming the glorie and praise of the chiefe conquerors. Now to the second.

I noted before that in songs of victorie, not onely the chiefe doers had their praise, but also all that dealt valiantly: as in the song of Debora next after God be-
selfe,

selfe, Baruck, Iael, and others: So here after the praise to God and his Christ for ouercomming the dragon, the Church also, euen all the faithfull, haue their praise and commendation, for their valiantnes in conquering the diuell and his armie. These be the words, And they ouercame him by the blood of the Lambe, and by the word of their testimonie, and they loued not their liues euen to the death. Then here is a praise of the elect, that they vanquish the dragon, here is their valiant strength which they tread him downe withall in battaile celebrated: but not to take any thing from the praise and glorie of Christ. For they doe not ouercome by any might of their owne, but by the blood of the Lambe, and by the word of their testimonie, &c. Christ then is hee that hath ouercome, and euery one that hath the true faith, in him and by him dooth get the victorie. Saint Paul, when he setteth forth the spirituall battaile, willet vs to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, and to put on the whole armour of God, Ephe. 6. Euen so may we learne in this place, how euery true Christian soule is armed to fight, and to get the victorie ouer the diuell. It is euen thus, to haue the true and liuely faith in the death of Christ, and so by his blood to be purged from all sinne: and to imbrace the most pure and holy word of Christ, and openly to professe it, and not onely in the time of peace, but eue when they be so persecuted for it that it cost them their liues. For then are they sayd not to loue their liues euen vnto the death, when they chuse rather to suffer all the cruell tortures and torments, which the diuell and the tyrants can deuise, then to deny the trueth and name of Iesus Christ. It is called the word of their testimonie, not that it is the word of man, but because they doe witness the same: For it pleaseth our God to giue this honour to his people, as to bee witnesses to his most sacred trueth. And our Saviour sayth, that he which doth not forsake father and mother, wife, children, and his life, for his sake, he is not worthie of him. And one thing is here to be obserued, that euen in death and martyrdom, euen in all reproches and torments which tyrants and persecutors lay vpon the holy seruants of God, they ouercome the dragon. Will ye then gladly escape from the iawes of this dragon, that he swallow you not vp with him into hell? Set all your trust in the blood of the Lambe of God Iesus Christ, for the remission and free pardon of all your sinnes. For being through a liuely faith iustified in him, the dragon hath nothing to lay to your charge wherein hee may iustly accuse ye before God. Take the sharpe sword of the spirit, euen the pure word of God, and fight against him with the same, for it shall cut and wound him deeply. Stand in the profession of this trueth, and be not ashamed to beare witness vnto it before men: and if it shall cost thee thy life, and that thy blood shall be shed for it, faint not: thou art one of those which get the victory in the great battaile, euen ouer the dragon, and ouer his Angels. For let not this depart out of thy minde, they ouercame him by the blood of the Lambe, and by the word of their testimonie, and they loued not their liues, euen to the death.

The next part of this heavenly song of victorie, sayth, Therefore reioyce ye heauens, and ye that dwell therein. That God and his sonne Iesus Christ doe raigne, that the diuell and his Angels are cast forth, that the chosen haue the victorie o-

uer

uer him through the blood of the Lambe, and that the saluation of the Church can neuer be shaken, are so happy things, that it behoueth the very heauens to reioyce, and all the Angels of God, yea and all the redeemed which haue their inheritance in the heauens. The heavenly spirits doe ioy wholly in the glorie of God, euen that his sonne doth raigne. The heauens and the earth in their kinde are glad also and reioyce: and how much greater cause haue we to reioyce then? which are not onely deliuered out of the hands of our enemies, euen out of the power of the diuell and of death, and set free from eternall damnation: but also lifted vp into heavenly dignitie, euen into the fellowship of Angels, made heires of glorie, and the sons and daughters of the blessed God. They which haue faith cannot but bee filled with ioy, euen with spirituall ioy, and despise all the vaine and transitorie pleasures of the flesh. They sell all that they haue to buy this pearle, and this treasure, which is like treasure that is hid in the field, Matth. 13. If wee doe not reioyce, it is an argument that wee haue not felt the power of the diuell conquered in our hearts. And hauing thus moued the heauens, and them that dwell therein to reioyce for this great victory, then he commeth to the last part, in which there is woe denounced to the reprobate, whom he calleth the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea, they haue no part nor inheritance in the heauens. And the cause is rendred of their woe, which is vttered thus, for the diuell is come downe to you, &c. The Church (as I noted before) with all her true children be citizens of the heavenly citie, and but strangers and pilgrims vpon the earth. The wicked which haue none other portion but in this life, euen the worldlings, they be called the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea. Well, the diuell is cast out of heauen, that is, he cannot impugn the saluation of the elect for to hazard the same: but all his power that way is bent and lighteth vpon the Infidels, I meane he conquereth and subdueth them, raigbeth ouer them as king, and draweth them into hell. But the speech may seeme straunge, that here is woe denounced to these inhabitants of the earth and of the sea, as it were from the victorie which Christ hath gotten ouer the diuell. Was not the diuell downe here below among them before? Were they not also vnder the woe and curse of God vnto eternall damnation, though Christ had neuer ouercome the diuell? For answer to this, we must confesse that all men are by nature, as the holy Apostle speaketh, the children of wrath. And so if Christ had not conquered Satan, all, not onely the reprobate, but also those which shall bee saued, should haue been vnder the woe. Also Satan before Christ fought this battaile, was among the inhabitants of the earth: but now being by our prince ouercome, hee commeth downe more heauie and in more tyrannous sort vpon them, and so their woe is as it were doubled. The victorie of Christ is turned to their deeper condemnation. How is that will some man say? Thus, Sathan being out of all hope euer to pull downe the saluation of the Church, that is, being cast out of heauen, hee will now wrecke his ire vpon the inhabitants of the earth: his power ouer them is not destroyed, and hee will now exercise it to the full, and leade them deeper into all horrible sinne and condemnation. The holie Ghost sayth he hath great wrath, knowing hee hath but a short time. The

Church

Church he may a little afflict and vex in this world, but he cannot hurt: and therefore he will, as we vse to say, haue his penniworth vpon those which bee still in his hand: he maketh them his vassals to fight for his kingdome against Christ, and against his Church: he hardeneth their hearts and blindeth their eyes, lea- deth them into the loue of darknes, and hatred of the light. Thus, I say, is their woe, through the wrath and tyrannous rage of the dragon, which is more heauilie come downe vpon them, greatly increased. And so wee see, that the faithfull haue all ioy by this victorie, and the reprobate through their owne corruption haue their woe increased. Satan doth now ride vpon them. And though the time from the passion of Christ to the day of iudgement may seeme vnto men to bee long, yet the diuell knoweth it is but a short time. Thus much touching this song of victorie.



The 26. Sermon.

CHAP. 12.

- 23 *And when the dragon saw that hee was cast vnto the earth, hee persecuted the woman which had brought forth the manchild.*
- 24 *But to the woman were giuen two wings of a great Eagle, that she might flie into the wildernes, into her place where she is nourished for a time, times, and halfe a time, from the presence of the serpent.*
- 25 *And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as it were a flood, after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.*
- 26 *But the earth holpe the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast forth of his mouth.*
- 27 *Then the dragon was wrath with the woman: and went and made warre with the remnant of her seede, which keepe the commaundements of God, and haue the testimonie of Iesus Christ.*
- 28 *And he stood vpon the sea sand.*



W had the last time (in that which goeth next before in this chapter) the battaile betwixt our great prince Michael, and the dragon. The dragon (as we saw) tooke the foyle, was ouercome, and cast downe from heauen to the earth. Also we heard the heauenly and most ioyfull song of victorie. And now S. Iohn sheweth that the dragon for all this dooth not giue ouer, but still pursueth the woman, and her seede: wee must still looke for trouble at his hands. When the dragon saw (sayth S. Iohn) that

he

he was cast into the earth, he persecuted the woman, which had brought forth the manchild: hee being then ouercome of the head, setteth vpon the bodie. Yea, knowing further that the saluation of the bodie is most finally ratified, so that the blessed estate of the woman cannot bee shaken in the heauens, he now endeou- reth to roote her out of the earth. For his persecuting of the woman, sheweth that his purpose is if he can vtterly and wholly to destroy with cruell death all and e- uery one which should be found to professe the name of Christ. He sought by stir- ring vp the high priests, the Pharisees, and other cruell tyrants, to roote out the name and memorie of Christianitie. And considering how few they were in com- parison, which imbraced the doctrine of the Gospell at that time, while all the A- postles remained in Ierusalem: and waying on the other side the great multitude, the mightie power and cruell rage of the aduersaries which were stirred vp and inflamed by the dragon, it is a very great miracle that the whole companie, being almost all in one citie, were not of a sudden set vpon and cruelly murdered. The dragon purposeth euen to spread his net ouer the al at once, and not to let any one escape. He hath for to effect this his purpose seruants & ministers euen in great nū- ber, armed with power, and burning with furious rage, and which indeede, begin- ning with Steuen, set vpon the rest. Why are not all destroyed? why doe they not with the like furie runne vpon all, that they did vpon Steuen? The Lord doth euen miraculously preserue and protect, his Apostles and other which abode in Ierusa- lem: and many escape by flight into other places, as ye may see if ye reade Act. 8. This flight and this dispersion, is so speedie and so without let and danger, that he sayth here, that to the woman were giuen two wings of a great Eagle, that shee might flye into the wildernes. These be the wings of Gods prouidence and mightie protection, opening and preparing the passage, and the place where his church should now rest and be harboured and fedde in the wildernes, euen among the Gentiles. The time of her abode in the wildernes was before numbred by daies, as a thousand, two hundreth and threescore daies, and here he sayth, a time, times, and halfe a time. Touching this time wee haue spoken before how mystically it is to be taken, and not as the Papists, which apply it vnto three yeares and an halfe, as yeares are taken in common vse, and so would proue that Antichrist shall raigne but so long. Our Sauour did in his owne person preach three yerres and an halfe, and therefore some doe interpret that that time is vsed here to signifie the whole time that the Church shall be fedde in the wildernes of this world. And indeede we saw in the former chapter that the two Prophets doe prophesie euen so long. So long also he sayth there, the holy citie shall bee troden vnder foote of the Gen- tiles. Then all the time that the Church shal be persecuted & vexed in this world, so long yet she shall be fedde. But how is it sayd that she might flye into the wil- dernesse from the presence of the serpent? Is not the diuell in all places of the world? where should any one get from his presence? The Gentiles did worship diuels (as S. Paul testifieth, saying, The gods of the Gentiles are diuels, 1. Cor. 10.) and the diuels had their kingdome ouer the nations of the world. Alas then, she flyeth from the presence of the diuell: but is it not still into the presence of the di- uell.

uell? There be diuels plentie before she come, and wherefoeuer she come, or any of her children they be euen compassed about with armies of diuels: and if they had not been there before, is the dragon such a lumpie that hee cannot make haste and speede to ouertake her? Can the Church here in earth flye swifter then the diuels? For answer to these things, we must note, that the flight of the Church from the presence of the serpent, is not meant that she did or could flye from the presence of the diuels, for they alwayes compass the faithfull, if we take his presence absolutely: but after a sort she flyeth his presence, when the power of the tyrants and persecutors which hee raiseth vp cannot reach vnto the Church or ouertake her to murder and kill her. Thus it is then, the diuels touching themselves could be with the Church wherefoeuer she became in the world, and how swiftly soeuer she fled: but they could not carrie the power of the murdering persecutors, and that is here called the presence of the serpent. Then marke, those which fledde from Ierusalem, could not flye from Satans temptations, wherefoeuer they became: but he could not reach them with the power of the high Priests and princes of the Iewes, that presence of his she fled from. Indeepe he attempted to pursue her that way, if he could haue brought it about, and Saul had letters and authoritie from the high priests vnto Damascus, Act. 9. but hee could doe little. For now Samaria receiued the Gospell, shortly after Antioch a great citie of the Gentiles had a most famous Church planted in it, and they were the first that were called Christians, as we reade, Act. 11. vers. 26. Then Paul and Barnabas were sent forth among the Gentiles, and the other Apostles also went forth, and great Churches were planted in all kingdomes almost in the world. Now what hope could the dragon haue to roote out the woman from the earth? which way can hee now turne him? Is he yet in hope to roote out from the earth the whole Church? will he yet endeavour such a thing? That he doth: he is so monstrous great, he hath so often preuailed, and hath so many wayes, he is so bold that he yet attempteth vtterly to rid the earth of her.

And marke what S. Iohn sayth: And the serpent cast out of his mouth water, as it were a flood, after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. This is a strange thing, and wonderfull to be considered, that the dragon, when the woman was fled from his presence, into the large and wide wilderness, cast out of his mouth such abundance of water, as to make a swift and mightie flood that should drowne the woman, and vtterly sweepe her off from the face of the earth. It was sayd before, that his taile drew the third part of the starres of heauen, and cast them to the earth, which sheweth the huge greatnes of the monster: and this casting forth a flood out of his mouth sheweth no lesse: a flood to ouerflowe and runne through the great wilderness, and so to ouerwhelme and drowne her wherefoeuer she were. This greatnes of the power of Satans kingdom causeth him to be so bold, as still to maintaine warre agaynst the kingdom and power of almightie God. Do not thinke (beloued) that the diuels are weake in power or in practise agaynst the Church: but when ye reade such things as this, consider what a most glorious power of God it is which doth vanquish him, and

plucke

plucke the poore woman out of his iawes. For indeede, though the power of the deuill in the king domes of this world which be exceeding great, he is a mighty terrible prince, and can commaund great things, yet compared to our great prince Michael, the Lord Iesus, hee is nothing. For our Lorde, vnder whose banner wee fight, is the king of kings, and the Lord of hostes, whose power is infinite, and lasteth for euer and euer. But what should this same flood be which commeth out of the deuils mouth? Do ye not suppose, that the waters which come forth of his bellic, bee as sweete and hole some as the fountaine it selfe out of which they flowe? Sweete things no doubt these waters are, euen as sweete as the deuill himselfe. But what are they that he would drowne the woman withall? Euen a flood of all foule heresies, of lyes, of reproches, and slanders, and such like. For hee raised vp heretikes, euen monsters, which drew many counterfeite Christians into perdition, and although (as Satan did know) hee could not destroy the faith and the saluation of the elect; yet by this meanes he could bring them all into extreme danger of their liues, for the heresies were such as the very Pagans might loath to heare of. And then those heresies comming out of his mouth as a part of those waters, yet he perswaded that the gospell bred them. Men cryed out that there were no such things before that doctrine came, & that they did by and by spring vp with it. The gospell being thus charged and made odious as a most foule doctrine, and such as bred monstrous opinions, all that did professe it were extremely hated, euen as men not worthy to be suffered to liue vpon the earth. Thus were the mindes of bloudie tyrants stirred vp, and persecutions grew hot and bitter. Then were the poore Christians euen compelled to meete in the nights in caues, and in secret places, & there to haue the holy exercises of religion. Vpon this Satan tooke occasion to accuse them of most horrible filthines: as if they should eate their children, and that men and women meeting together out were the lights put, & filthines committed, euen adulteries and incests, fathers with their daughters, the brethren with their sisters, and such like.

Then further the heate of persecution being terrible, and sundry reuolting, the persecutors hired and procured some of them, to say indeed, that when they were at those meetings of the Christians there were such filthy things committed, and that they themselves had there committed such things. This gaue strength and credit to the slanders, and what thinke ye was the rage and furie of the heathen? Who would not thinke he did euen a good work to destroy such? There is now nothing but killing and murdering vpon heapes. And yet the danger is further increased: for the wrath of the Lord being kindled for such wickednes committed agaynst his sonne, agaynst his pure word and Church, hee poured forth horrible plagues vpon the worlde: then the subtil serpent did put and suggest into the mindes of the infidels, that all those plagues came because the Gods were angrie at that new learning. The Christians were said to be the cause of all those plagues: So that so soon as ever any strange thing fell out, they cried, it was the Christians, call to the lyons, which was one of the wayes by which they sought to death. Ancient writers which liued in those times, doe tell us these things. Then wee see how the waters of heresies, of lyes, slanders, and reproches, doth drawe the woman

mightie swift streame: So that without the wonderfull power of God, prouiding for the woman euen miraculouly, how can shee but bee **caried away** of the flood? how can she but be rooted out of the earth? Well, the **blessed Lord** doth indeede prouide for her: and delinereth her from being swallowed vp of this great flood, of all these stinking waters which issued out of the dragons bellie. For as the Lord hath ratified the saluation of this woman in heauen, and set it so fast that the dragon cannot shake it, so also he preferueth her in the wilderness of this world, vntill such time as she hath brought forth all her children. The dragon doth cause thousands of her children indeed to be cruelly slaine in all places, but he can not roote her out, nor make her barren, but she shal still continue in the world, bring forth and nurse vp blessed childred to God, euen to the day of the generall iudgement. Then the deuill doth tempt, the deuill doth persecute, but he cannot plucke downe the Church from heauen, from her saluation, nor yet destroy her with bodily death out of this world. These things are fixed and established by God, and it is impossible that they should be altered. But let vs see how the woman escapeth drowning, for the flood pursueth her into the wilderness. The earth (sayth Saint Iohn) holpe the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed vp the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. Here is a wonderfull deliuerance, beholde and consider.

Our Lord is the Lord of hostes, and hath all creatures both the liuing and the dead at his commandement to helpe his Church. For as all things, when he willet stande vp and fight against the wicked, so also they fight for the defence of the Church when he commaundeth them. The earth is the Lords, and all that is therein: The earth acknowledgeth her Lord, and obeyeth his commandement: the earth doth helpe the woman. Wonderfull is God in his prouidence: doth the earth helpe the woman? yea which of his creatures shall not helpe his chosen, euen willingly when he wil haue it so? for though it be said that the earth helpe the woman, yet wee must looke vp higher, and knowe that it is the Lord which doth it. For the earth doth it but as the Lordes handmaid, and being thereunto by him appointed. Then the holy Ghost doth not vse this speech to draw our eyes from God, to seeke succour elsewhere: but indeed setteth forth his wonderfull power and prouidence which commaundeth and directeth all creatures to the seruice of his Church. But now, it may be demaunded whether this be to bee vnderstood of the very earth indeed, euen the ground that we tread vpon? Nay, ye know that in this booke things are to be taken mystically: and as hee compareth the heresies, the lies, reproches, and slaunders to a flood of waters cast forth of the dragons mouth to carry away the woman: So he compareth the drinking & drying vp of the same, as if the earth should cleaue and swallow vp a flood of waters: for there is no way to restraine a great flood, but if the earth open and drinke it. This it is then, all the heresies, all the slaunders and lies cast forth as a mightie flood to drowne the Church, haue by the good prouidence of God euen as it were suncke into the earth, and haue bene swallowed vp. The Church remaineth in the world at this day after all those ancient crimes and slaunders cast forth against her, they being as it were suncke into the

the earth, and vanished. Shee is long since iustified and cleered from those foule faultes which the subtil serpent caused her to be charged withall, and brought into hatred. Great multitudes, euen of the wicked haue been compelled to confesse her innocencie, and to praise her. The heresies of all the auncient heretikes are euen as it were drunke vp by the earth. Some indeed Satan raiseth vp in all places, as his instruments to renew those former heresies, but cannot preuaile to rend and teare all in peeces, and to vex and make hauock as of old. Indeed the errors of poperie did ouerspread almost all in time past, euen like a flood; but now, euen as if the earth had opened her mouth a great part are suncke, and euen the papistes themselves confesse that they were abuses: and the rest of their matters can hardly retaine credite, no not among a few. For not only the true beleeuers, which in these last times are many, but also multitudes of meere worldlings doe see the vanitie of the poperie, and doe despise it. And in this high prouidence of God, euen the earth, that is, the state of worldly things, and worldly men, haue ministred some help. For when any mightie cruell tyrant, beleeuing the filthie lyes and slaunders raised against the faithfull, purposeth to roote them all out, and ioyneth with other of the same mind: one thing or other riseth vp euen of and about the earthly state, and holdeth them occupied and busied, so that they cannot performe their desire against the church. Great kings and princes in these latter dayes haue sworne each to other in a cursed league, which yet they call the holy league, that they will ioyne all together, & euen destroy from the earth all that professe the holy gospell, whom they indeed iudge to be wicked heretikes. Why haue they not preuailed? the earth hath opened her mouth, the worldly state hath bene such that they neuer could: but one way or other haue had their hands full. The floods of lies, of reproches, and slaunders cast forth by those that worship the beast, against the faithfull and holy seruants of the Lord, and with which the cares of princes haue bene filled, and their minds enflamed to wrath and crueltie, and euen by this meanes suncke. Indeepe there haue bene horrible slaughters committed, and many slaine in France and other countries, but the dragon is farre from drowning the woman with his stinking flood. If ye consider what a few the true professors of the gospell bee, and what wonderfull power there is in the worlde in the handes of them that hate them deadly, and wish them rooted out: ye shall be constrained to confesse that it is euen a great miracle, as if the earth did open her mouth, and drinke vp the flood of the dragons lyes, that the state of kingdomes and earthly thinges is such, that they can not according to their desire ioyne together to destroy the woman. And euen as the gospell was through the subtilty of the serpent, charged in old time to breed all those monstrous heresies which sprung vp; so also at this day the enemies crie out, that our doctrine doth bring forth all the heresies that arise. The Anabaptists, the Libertines, those of the familie of loue, yea all such execrable monsters, are by the seruants of Antichrist, termed as it were the children of those which preach the Gospell. But the falshood of this appeareth, and euen the earth openeth her mouth and drinketh in the flood of their false accusations. Furthermore, it hath pleased God in all ages to vse the men of this world sundry waies to helpe his Church: who are euen as the

earth, in respect of any heavenly thing. Thus wee see how the woman doth escape the flood which the dragon casteth out of his mouth. The Church then cannot be rooted out from the face of the earth. Let this comfort and stay vs when the rage is greatest against the seruants of Christ. Yee shall at sometime see such tempestes raised by Satan, as if heauen and earth should bee mingled together: Yee shall see such power bent against the gospel, and so great terror, as if all should downe. No thing but slaughters, and terrible threatnings: yea so terrible as if fire came out of their mouthes euen to deuour all. Be not then dismaid, nor doe not faint: the gospel cannot be beate downe, the cause of God cannot be ouerthrowen, neither can Satan euer bring to passe by all his sleighes and cruell practises, but that there shall euer some stand vp boldly to professe, to teach, and to maintaine the same. Now it followeth: Then the dragon was wrath with the woman, and went and made warre with the remnant of her seed, &c. What, was he not wrath with her before? Yes, but this is to teach vs, that the heate & fury of his wrath stil increased. But what is the reason that his wrath thus increaseth? Because his enterprises faile, and that he can by no meanes haue his purpose to destroy the woman, therefore he is more & more enflamed in wrath against her. In this is set before vs a right diuinish wrath: for he hath no cause to bee so moued against the woman, but that hee can not hurt nor destroy her. What hath she done to him? hee sought to cast her downe from eternall blessednes, and tooke the foyle, and himselfe was cast to the earth and all his. He laboured then to roote her out from the face of the earth, and all the waies which he deuiseh faile of bringing his desire to passe: and now he is more & more wrath, that he can no way destroy her. Is not this a mad kind of wrath? as this is in the deuill, so shall ye see it euident in many men whom he doth worke in. If they be once inflamed with burning malice against any man, it carrieth them with a desire to doe them all the mischief which they can. It is euen meate and drinke to them when they can hurt.

Now if they practise and deuise many wayes and meanes, and see nothing will preuaile, they can not hurt those whom they so bitterly hate; that is a wonderfull thing, it greenueth them and tormenteth them sore, and euen kindleth in them a greater fire of wrath and displeasure, and the heate of their furie burneth hotter within them. For as it is some kinde of quenching or slaking the heate and fire of their malice, when they can execute their desire vpon those whom they so deadlie hate, so the missing of their purpose, kindleth the same. Let men take heede, for it is a most cursed thing to be like, & to resemble the wicked deuils. Such as abound in malice are like the deuill, and resemble him exceedingly: If Satans wrath bee kindled, then he will not yet giue ouer. Giue ouer? No, hee will neuer giue ouer vntill he be quite cast down. For he could not preuaile against Christ but was cast down, yet he set vpon the church. When he saw one way succeeded not, he sought another: when he could not destroy her out of the heauens, he attempted to roote her wholly out of the earth. When he findeth that he cannot doe that, his wrath is still kindled more and more, and he will doe what he can to afflict her. Here is the thing, he cannot doe what he will: therefore he will doe what hee can. His fierie cruell

cruell hatred and malice will not suffer him to rest. Hee will still be deuising what harmes and mischiefes he can: and therefore it is said, hee was wrath with the woman, and went and made warre with the remnant of her seed, &c. He is then come downe thus low that hee can proceed no further but to make warre with the true children of the Church, and that remaineth to all the faithfull, and shall remaine euen to the end of the world. There is no pacifying of this enemy, there is no truce to be made or had with him for so much as one minute of an hower: but it behooueth vs to be alwaies armed, and alwayes to stand readie to repell his assaults. Behold here also euen as it were the image of the deuill in many men, (for as the regenerate do beare the image of God their father who hath begotten them in the new and spirituall birth, so the wicked doe beare the image of their father the deuill) which being overcome with malice that raigneth in them, can neuer cease nor giue ouer, seeking and deuising howe to hurt those whome they hate, although they take neuer so many foyles. If they cannot wrecke their anger to the full, they will also assay to doe what they can. If they bee foyled and foyled againe, yea euen shamed, and can see no hope to doe halfe so much harme, nor the hundredth part which they wish; yet they will not giue ouer, but if they can hurt but in a small trifle it shall come. Here is the very image of the deuill, where ye see this. Ye will say, it is a great thing which Satan is here sayd to doe, that hee warreth against the faithfull. He doth wonderfully vex and torment the true Christians here in the world. It is very true, this is a great thing considered in it selfe: but compared with the other two, the one, that he sought to overthrow the saluation of the Church the other, that he sought to destroy her at once out of the earth, that shee might neuer bring forth any more children to God, it is but a small thing. And so I say, note it in men which burne in malice & wrath, & they can neuer giue ouer, their diuinish mind can neuer rest, though it bee but in small trifles, yet will it shew it selfe. The reason is euident, Satan the fierie red dragon cannot rest, and hee possesseh their mind, therefore they cannot rest, for he thrusteth them forward, and wil in no wise let them rest.

If they haue lyed, if they haue slandered, if they haue done iniuries other waies, & be conuincd, rebuked, & for y time eue suffer shame, yet they must on againe, he euen thrusteth them vpon their noses. O wofull and lamentable estate of slavery and bondage, which the seruants of Satan are hold in, when the fierce dragon filleth them full of his fierie malice, and will haue them as restless as himselfe, euen till he bring them together with himselfe vnto endlesse miserie. Resist him therefore, beloued, giue not place vnto him by anger, and wicked enuie: for if he once geth hold in them, that is to fill the heart with malice, hee can hardly be cast forth. But let vs returne now againe vnto that former point of Satans making warre. He maketh warre with the remnant of her seed. Here is that which we are to looke for, euen continuall warre with the dragon, and with all the power which he can make: we haue him our cruel and fierce enemy. All the true children of the church must make full account of this so long as they liue, and stand prepared for al-

though he find it (as I said) beyond his reach to roote out the mother, yet hee will not cease to torment as many of her children as he can, that he may terrifie others from imbracing the holy faith. We are put in mind of this by Saint Paul, and willed to put on the whole armour of God, that we may bee able to resist, Ephess. 6. Here is also to bee noted, that Saint Iohn maketh a short description of the right feede, or true children of the woman: for he sayth, which keepe the commandments of God, and haue the testimonie of Iesus Christ. It is but short, but it is a pithie description of the right feede, he noteth two things which both goe together in the sound Christians.

They hold the doctrine and faith of Iesus Christ in an open and bolde profession, that is one: and walke in obedience to the law of God, that is the other. They professe the gospel, and will not denie it though it should cost them their liues. And they professe it not with a dead faith, but that liuely faith which worketh by loue: for he sayth, they haue the testimonie of Iesus, and they keepe the commandments of God. And this is one chiefe cause why the dragon doth rage in wrath so fore against them, that they will not with the rest of the worlde obey and worship him: but cleaue to the Lord God in faith and obey his lawes. The children of this world also, the ministers of Satan can not abide them, because their workes bee good; and they loue the light, and they themselves loue darkenesse more then light, because their deedes be euill, Iohn 3. verse 19. Hereupon it followeth, that the dragon shall alwaies haue them for to take his part, and most readie to persecute the true children of God, because they cannot but hate, euen as hee hateth. Thus much touching the dragons making war with the remnant of the womans feede.

It followeth in the text, *And I stood vpon the sea sand.* This short clause maketh a passage vnto that which followeth in the next chapter, touching the vision and description of the beast that riseth out of the sea. But whether Saint Iohn saith of himselfe, I stood vpon the sea sand, or whether he sayth that the dragon stood vpon the sea sand, is the doubt: because the Greeke may bee interpreted, either I stood, or hee stood. Some expound it that Saint Iohn in vision stood vpon the sea sande, that hee might beholde the rising vp of the beast. But I take it the more probable, that the dragon stood vpon the sea sand, as it were working and framing out of the sea his chiefe instrument the huge and terrible beast, by whome he warreth against the seruants of God. It is not much materiall whether way wee take it, and therefore I will not stay vpon it, but will here make an end.

The



The 27. Sermon.

CHAP. 13.

- 1 *And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, hauing seuen heads, and tenne hornes, and upon his hornes ten crownes, and upon his heads a name of blasphemie.*
- 2 *And the beast which I saw was like vnto a Leopard, and his feete were as the feete of a Beare, and his mouth as the mouth of a Lion, and the dragon gaue him his power, and his seate, and great authoritie.*
- 3 *And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death, & his deadly wound was healed, and all the world wondered after the beast.*
- 4 *And they worshipped the dragon which gaue power to the beast, and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like vnto the beast? Who is able to warre with him?*
- 5 *And there was giuen vnto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and power was giuen vnto him to doe two and fourtie moneths.*
- 6 *And he opened his mouth vnto blasphemie against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and those that dwell in beauen.*
- 7 *And it was giuen vnto him to make warre with the Saints and to ouercome them: and power was giuen him ouer euery tribe, and tongue, and nation.*
- 8 *And all the inhabitants of the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the booke of life of the Lambe, which was killed from the beginning of the world.*
- 9 *If any man haue an eare, let him heare.*
- 10 *He that leadeth into captiuitie, shall goe into captiuitie: he that killeth with the sword, shall be killed with the sword. Here is the patience, and the faith of Saints.*



And I saw a beast, &c. In the former chapter, wee haue had the description of the womans greatest enemy, namely, the great red dragon. In this chapter are painted out the next greatest enemies which she hath, euen the chiefe instruments which she diuell useth to warre against her and her children here in this world. For the dragon, as it is sayd in the latter end of the former chapter, dooth make warre against those which keepe the commandments of God, and which haue the testimonie of Iesus Christ: and he doth worke and make this warre by instruments, and

now S. Iohn hath them shewed vnto him in vision, and doth accordingly describe them. First he sayth, I saw a beast rising out of the sea. Her enemies are beasts, we shall see nothing but beastly qualities. Wee finde in the holy Scriptures, that by beasts are figured certaine great kingdomes or Monarchies. As for your better instruction, reade the seuenth chapter of Daniel, and yee shall see that the Angell doth so expound it, touching the foure beasts which Daniel sawe in vision. Then we are out of doubt that this beast representeth a great Monarchie, power or dominion, which the diuell vseth as his instruments to warre against the Saints. Indeede we must note by the way, that the holy Ghost doth not represent the ciuill power of the kings by sauage beasts, for the ciuill power is of God: but he figureth out the pride, the ambition, the crueltie, the rauening, and other sauage qualities of those mightie kings, which erected and vpheld those great Monarchies. We see then what is meant by the beast: but how is he sayd to rise out of the sea? doth a Monarchie arise out of the sea? As the beast is not to be taken literally, no more is the sea to be vnderstood of the very sea indeede, where the fishes doe swimme, and where the shippes doe saile: but it must bee interpreted in a mysticall sense. And that is thus, the tempestuous and troublesome estate of the nations in the world, is called a sea. And from the boyling and broyling estate of the nations, did this beast arise. For the Romane Empire (which is figured by this monstrous beast) did spring and grow vp from the contentions and discords, and diuisions among the kingdomes, which are as a raging sea. For while they through ambition and vaine glorie vexe and weaken each other, commeth a stronger and subdueth them all. Thus the beast ariseth out of the sea: this ye see is very plaine.

Then he sayth, that he had seuen heads, and tenne hornes, and vpon his hornes tenne crownes. The dragon in the former chapter had seuen heads and tenne hornes: and this beast his child is very like him, yea as like as a child may be to the father. Here is a difference, that the dragon hath his crownes vpon his heads and not vpon his hornes, and this beast his child, hath his crownes vpon his hornes and not vpon his heads. What is the reason of this? I will tell ye, how I take it. The dragon hath great power, which is signified by his hornes: but hee hath preuailed most by his craft and subtilties, which are signified by his heads, and by them hath gotten greatest victories, and therefore they are crowned. This beast hauing very much of the subtiltie of his father, hath yet preuailed most by force and power, euen by the power of kings, which his hornes besides strength doe represent, and therefore these hornes are crowned. That there is the name of blasphemie vpon his heads, it fitly expresseth the qualitie of the father, who is euen the fountaine of all blasphemies agaynst the most high God, and agaynst all goodnesse. Wee may also perceiue by this what the seruants of God are to looke for at the hands of this beast. That which is blasphemous against the God of glorie, how wil it spare me? all crueltie is here to be looked for.

Then next this beast is described as a compound of diuers beasts: and so indeed a very monster of monsters. For his bodie is like to a Leopard, which some call the

cat

cat of the mountaine, a beast (as they say) very fierce, swift and subtile. His feete are like to the feete of a Beare: and we know a Beare, and how vgly, and rauening he is. His mouth is like the mouth of a Lion. The Lion is the most stately proud beast that liueth. Well then we see that this beast, this Romane Empire, (as we shall see it plainly proued to be the dominion of Rome when we come to the 17. chapter, by the exposition of the Angell) hath the properties of those three beasts. There is craft, there is rauening, there is pride, and many other sauage and beastly lustes. What shall the Church looke for at the hands of this beast, but that which cometh from Leopards, Beares, and Lions? And now least wee might thinke that this monster should not bee able to doe much harme, it is added, that the dragon gaue him his power, his throne, and great authoritie. The dragon is the great mightie prince of darknes, the god of this world, he is worshipped and obeyed, he is of great power and might in al manner of vngodlines, it is therefore a very high throne, it is great dignitie and power among the inhabitants of the world, which he giueth vnto him. This mightie prince then the dragon setteth him that is the beast aloft in might and glorie and dominion, that he may execute his will in oppugning the trueth, and murdering the Saints. But it may bee demaunded: Doth the dragon resigne ouer all vnto him? doth he goe out of his throne, and let him haue all the doings, and all the glorie and the worship? Nay, it is not meant so: for Satan holdeth his throne, he is still the god of the world, the prince of darknes, and worketh mightily in the children of disobedience; and is worshipped still together with the beast: For S. Iohn sayth in that which followeth, they worshipped the beast, and they worshipped the dragon which gaue power to the beast. Then the dragon dooth not forgoe any honour in giuing his throne and power to the beast, but vseth the beast as his chiefe instrument, by whom hee worketh, to get glorie to himselfe: for the throne of the beast and his throne doe become all one, so that by the beast hee setteth vp all his abominations: they worke together, and are worshipped together, in as much as the beast maintaineth idolatrie, and worship of diuels. But here will arise another doubt: for S. Paul speaking of the powers, sayth, that they bee of God, and willed that men should obey the Romane Emperours, when they were heathen: how then is it sayd that the diuell set vp this beast, euen the Romane Empire? This is easie to be answered. The Lord God disposeth the kingdomes of this world to whom it pleaseth him. The ciuill power also is ordained of God, and is good, and to bee obeyed euen for conscience sake. But now as the men come vp to it by craft, by fraud, by oppression, by cruelty and rauening, and as they rule with tyrannie and all wicked lustes, whereby they impugne the trueth, they are sayd to bee set vp by the diuell, and to worke by the diuell: for all those things are of the diuell, and the Empire is called a beast, not in respect of the ciuill power, but for those beastly qualities, which are of the diuell.

Then it followeth, that S. Iohn sayth, he saw one of his heads, as it were wounded to death. Here is some difficultie to finde the perfect sense of this: because it is not said which of the seuen heads was wounded, nor yet when it was wounded.

The Angell in chapter 17. sayth, that the seven heads are seven hills, & seven kings. He saith that five of those kings were fallen, one of them was standing at that time when this reuelation was giuen, and one was to come. We must take this according as the like is to be taken in Daniel, chapt. 7. where the Angell sayth the four beasts are four kings. Hee meaneth not by four kings no more but four men which were kings: but by euery one a succession of kings. As by the Lion was signified the king of the Chaldeans, that is, all the kings which succeeded each other in that Empire. So must we take it for these heads, when he sayth seven kings, not for seven men which were kings, whereof five were fallen, one was, and one was to come: but indeede, for seven seuerall governments which had kingly power, in euery one of which many succeeded each other. And of these seven, the Empire stood at that time, for Rome was gouerned then by Emperours, which was the sixt head, and the Papacie the seventh head, which was not then come. Now it is most probable that this wound was made either in the sixt head, that is, in the Empire, or els in the seventh, which is the Papacie. For such a deadly wound is not read of in any of the former five that were past. Wee reade of some wound giuen to the Papacie before it was risen vp to the full, as in the dayes of *Wickliffe* and *Husse*: but the wound was not so deadly. I take it therefore cleere that the wound was in the Empire, that is in the sixt head. Now when this deadly wound was, is to be inquired. Here some say at one time, and some at another. To let all other passe, no doubt the most deadly wound was made by an Emperour, euen by Constantine the great, somewhat more then three hundred years after the birth of Christ. It may bee sayd, that the Empire did flourish in his dayes, how then can it bee taken that the deadly wound was made by him in the sixt head of the beast, which was the Empire? To answer this, we must remember that which I sayd before, namely, that the ciuill power which is of God, is not figured by beasts, nor by the heads of the beast: but the beastly qualities of those which rule. So then Constantine was Emperour, but, whereas all the Emperours of Rome before him were heathen, and maintained the worship of diuels, and oppressed the Church, murdering many thousands of Christians, (such an instrument was the sixt head of the beast for the dragon) he the same Constantine became a Christian, and greatly aduanced the Church: was not here euen a deadly wound giuen to this head of the beast? The whole power of the Empire was by the wicked Emperours turned agaynst the Church, euen to roote her out and to destroy her children, and now quite contrarie the same power is by this Christian Emperour applied altogether for her honor and defence. Where is now the dragons beast which he set vp to warre against the woman? he lyeth now for a time wounded euen as it were vnto death. This indeede was but for a time, because this deadly wound was healed vp againe by wicked Emperours that succeeded, and by the Popes, for it came to passe that the whole power of the Empire, and of the Papacie ioyned together against the Church, and became as beastly in setting vp Idolatrie, and murdering the Saints, as euer were the heathen Emperours. The wound is healed. Hereupon it followeth, that the world wondred after the beast. The dominion and the power of this

beast

beast spreadeth it selfe againe sarre, and is wondred at for the greatnes. Doubtles there be great kingdoms and nations of the world (as we know) which were neuer subiect to the Empire & Papacie of Rome: but the Scripture vseth this speech and sayth, al the world wondred, and worshipped the beast, when the greatest part or very many nations became subiect to this tyrannie. This is indeede to giue vs a note what a mightie enimie the woman (that is the Church) hath, besides the dragon. The world dooth not onely wonder after the beast, but doe also ioyne themselves, as it is the manner of all meere worldlings where they see the greatest power, there to ioyne themselves, howsoeuer the power be wickedly and blasphemously abused against God and his trueth. And therefore it is sayd, that they worshipped the dragon that gaue power to the beast, and they worshipped the beast. They fall downe and worship Idols, and so indeede they worship diuels. They reiect the holy doctrine of God, and imbrace the decrees and doctrines of men, vpheld and maintained by the power of wicked Emperours and vngodly Popes. We must needes confesse that men worship them, whose decrees and whose religion they imbrace: therefore let it not seeme straunge, that he sayth they worshipped the beast. If we imbrace sincerely the lawes and ordinances of God, then we worship him. If we receiue the doctrines of diuels, and the worship inuented by them, then wee worship diuels: who can deny this with any shew of reason? If we follow the decrees of Popes and Emperours, setting vp Idolatrie and superstition, the as we worship diuels, so we worship the beast, howsoeuer in our blind intents wee imagine that we worshippinge God. The dragon then and the beast are worshipped together, that is, the diuell and the Romane tyrannie. And S. Iohn addeth, that the world wondring, sayth, who is like to the beast? who is able to warre with the beast? The riches, the dignitie, the glorie, and the power of the beast are such, and so great, that there is none comparable in the whole world. For since the Papacie sprong vp, and the power of the Romane Empire ioyned with it, there hath been none such, in the opinion of men, vnder heauen. For who knoweth not that the eyes of the world were so dazeled with the glorie of the Papacie, that they thought the power of the Popes was not onely aboue all the high things in this world, but also did reach euen into the highest heauens, and vnto the lowest hell? They tooke it that the Pope might carrie to heauen whom hee would, and whom he would he might cast downe to hell: then who could warre with the beast? doe yee not see the reason of their wonderment, and of their speech?

It followeth, that there was giuen vnto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies. O most horrible wicked beast that must blaspheme the liuing God, his trueth and sanctuarie! But it may here first bee demaunded, who giueth him this wicked mouth to vtter great things and blasphemies? You will say, who but the diuell? as it is sayde before, that the dragon gaue vnto him his power, and his seate, and great authoritie. No doubt such horrible blasphemies come from the diuell: hee is euen as the wellspring and fountaine of them all. But doubtles Saint Iohn telleth vs heere, that God gaue to the beast this mouth

to speake great things, and blasphemies. It wilbe said, how can the most holy God bee said to giue such a mouth to speake blasphemies? I will shew you. Saint Paul speaking of the comming of Antichrist, sayth, that because men receiued not the loue of the truth that they might be saued, God would send them strong delusion to beleue lyes, &c. 2. Theff. 2. How doth God send them strong delusion? Euen thus: when in his iust iudgement for the wicked contempt of the trueth, he giueth scope to Satan to set vp the great Antichrist, and by him to spread forth all his poyson. So in this place we are to looke thus high as vnto God, who iustly for the wickednes of the world letteth the deuill loose to set vp such a blasphemous mouth: and so after a sort the Lord God giueth him this mouth. But this beast hath seuen heads, and euery head doubtles hath his mouth; it may therefore bee deniaunded, of which of the heads is this mouth? I answered, that euery one of the seuen heads had a blasphemous mouth: for those fise seuerall states of gouernment by which Rome had bene gouerned, which were fallen when Iohn receiued this prophecie, were bent against God and his truth, and did speake blasphemies. The sixt head, that is the persecuting Emperours, had an exceeding blasphemous mouth against God, and against his truth. But the seuenth head exceedeth them all, and therefore no doubt Saint Iohn speaketh chiefly of that seuenth head here. For who is able to set forth the greatnes of the things which the papacy hath boasted of, and the monstrous foulness of their blasphemies, euen beyond all blasphemies of heathen tyrants? What power was it almost that belongeth vnto Christ which the pope did not challenge? and what is there in the office of Christ, which hee hath not vttered his blasphemies against? Looke vpon the authoritie which hee vsurpeth ouer the word of God: See what power he chalengeth to remit sinnes: Consider how many mediators he setteth vp, and what hee ascribeth to the merites of man: yea goe through all their worship, and yee shall find almost nothing but horrible prophanations of Gods trueth, and foule blasphemies. A man might write large volumes of this thing.

It is added, That power was giuen him to doe, two and fourtie monethes. This is also to be referred to the God of heauen, who ruleth ouer all, that in his righteous iudgement he giueth power vnto this huge beast to work his tyrannie in the world to the destruction of infinite thousands, which wickedly despise the holy doctrine of God. They would not denie their corrupt and filthie lustes, euen the pleasures of sinne, they would not submit themselues to the glorious Scepter of grace, that the king of glory might raigne in them vnto their eternall blessednes: and therefore this beastly tyrant hath power giuen him to raigne ouer them, and to exercise his spirituall tyrannie, euen to plunge them deepe into the bottomlesse gulf of eternall miseries. For all the power which is giuen to this beast to doe, is in these two points, the one in afflicting and murdering the seruants of God, which turneth to their good: and the other in seducing the children of this world vnto damnation. The time that this beast shall raigne is expressed to bee two and fourtie monethes. This is the same time which we had in the eleuenth chapter, in a thousand two hundred and threescore dayes. It is three yeares and an halfe: but we must not be

so grosse as to take it literally, as the papists doe for three yeares and an halfe, as we reckon our common yeares, but according to the tenor of this prophecie, we must take it mystically, seeing one head of this beast, that is, the heathen persecuting Emperours made hauocke of the Church with many cruell slaughters, about three hundred yeares. We may not imagine that the time which this head raigned, is excluded or not contained in these two and fortie moneths. The time that this beast shall haue power to do in the world seemeth very long vnto vs, which take a thousand yeares to be a long time, but with the eternall God, a thousand yeares are but as yesterday, they be almost as nothing: and to bring vs to see into the shortnes of the time that this beast shall raigne, compared with eternitie, he setteth it forth by a few monethes. Because it ministreth great comfort to consider that the Church is in her pilgrimage and sorrowfull conflict but for a time, and shall remaine in glorie for euer and euer. Let vs waite patiently, and the end of this tyrannie will come.

The next verse sayth, that hee opened his mouth vnto blasphemie against God, to blaspheme his name, his tabernacle, & the that dwel in heauē. This beast, this Roman dominion, exerciseth to the full all that power to do euill which is permitted vnto him. For he openeth that wicked mouth which is giuen him vnto blasphemy, euen against the most high God, against his name, euē his holy and pure worship, against his tabernacle, that is his Church, and against the Angels and spirites of iust men which are in the heauens. All these doth the beast blaspheme. Well, no man can denie, but that the heathen persecuting Emperors did blaspheme all these: for they denied God's father of our lord Iesus Christ. But if we affirme that the papacie is one head of this beast, how can it bee shewed that the said papacie blasphemeth the true God, his worship, his Church, his Angels and Saints in heauen? I answered, that they blaspheme God many waies, and for example, what horrible blasphemy is it, that they take vpon them to picture the Godhead, which is inuisible and incomprehensible, yea that they picture the glorious trinitie, and will resemble it by a man with three faces in one, which is a monster? And doth not the papacie horribly blaspheme the name and worship of God, when they condemne the holy and pure religion of God to be heresie? when they establish their owne decrees aboue the holy scriptures of the prophets and Apostles. They doe also blaspheme his tabernacle, when they accurse and condemne for heretikes all the true worshippers of God, euen all those which will worship him according to the prescript rules of his holy word. They blaspheme the angels and saints in heauen, when sacrilegiously ascribing vnto them diuine honour, as by praying vnto them and making them mediators, they say that the Angels and Saints doe allow of the same. Also many other waies they blaspheme them, when they make them to bee patrones of their abominations. For like as he may be said to blaspheme God, which sayth that God alloweth periuries, whoredomes, and cruell murders: so may they be said to blaspheme the Saints and Angels in heauen, which say that they allowe of the highest sacriledge, of Idolatrie, of superstition, and of many abominations.

Then next it is said, That it was giuen vnto him to make warre with the Saints, and

and to ouercome them: and that power was giuen him ouer euery tribe, & tongue, and nation. Here be two things set foorth, the one is the terrible might and power which is granted vnto him to make warre withall against the true worshippers of God, and to ouercome them. The other expresth the largenes of his dominion. Touching the former of these, it is certaine that he doth ouercome them but by an outward force and victorie in tormenting and killing their bodies, he cannot cause them to forsake the truth, that way they get the full victorie ouer him. A good meditation is here to be had, that the Saints of God are cruelly troden downe, oppressed and murdered here in the world. For if we were not thus taught aforehand by the holy Ghost, we should thinke that God regarded not these, but fauoured those that haue such power to tread them downe. O it is the lot of the Saints, to be cruelly murdered by the beast, that is, by the Roman tyrannie. How many thousands did the Emperours sleigh in the ten great persecutions? And what slaughters haue the popes and their adherents caused to be made? It is wonderfull to consider the victories which they euen as rauening wolues, haue had ouer the poore lambes of Christ: And not in some one countrey or nation, but in many great kingdomes, for power is giuen him ouer euery tribe, and tongue, and nation, (which is the other thing set forth in this verse) and looke how farre his dominion reacheth, so far his fierce and sauage crueltie against all that will not worship him spreadeth it selfe. Hereby it hath come to passe that great heapes haue beene slaine here in England, in Scotland, in France, in Germanie, in the low countries, and in other kingdomes farre distant from Rome, yet by the power and lawes of the Romane beast. What other Monarchie hath there beene ouer the kingdomes of the world since Christ, but the Empire and papacie of Rome? There be indeed that haue large dominions, but nothing to y^e which is here spoken of. And if any wil reply that Rome neuer had dominion ouer all the kinreds, and nations, and tongues of the earth. I answere that the holy Ghost here as in other places, and namely, Act. 2. nameth all nations, to signifie very many.

Now let the papists brag of their multitude, of their vniuersalitie, and consent, and that therefore they be catholike: Yee see here that the beast with seuen heads (one of which heads is the kingdome of Antichrist) hath power giuen him ouer euery tribe, and tongue, & nation. Doth the largenes of his dominion make it good? Hath he the truth on his side, because hee can sleigh in all nations, those that will not worship him? How foolish are the papists in glorying of their multitudes, and that they haue alwayes preuailed ouer those which haue withstoode them? seeing the kingdome of the beast is here described to bee so large, and so mightie, and killing in all nations those that will not worship the beast.

Now as it hath beene declared, that hee shall make warre against the Saintes, and ouercome them, that is, by an outward victorie killing their bodies: so in the next words hee sheweth the victorie which hee shall haue ouer the children of this world, by seducing them vnto eternall damnation. For it followeth, And all the inhabitants of the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the lambe which was killed from the beginning of the world. Antichrist then

then preuaileth ouer the bodies of the faithfull, and ouer the soules of the vnfaithfull. In the one, he murdereth the bodie, but can not hurt the soule: in the other, he can sleigh both soule and body into hell. For what shall become of all those which worship the beast? doe they not forsake God? And marke here, how when Saint Iohn hath set forth that the beast shall haue power ouer all nations, and shall make war with the Saints, and ouercome them, he addeth by and by, that all the inhabitants of the earth shall worship him: which is to note vnto vs, that looke vpon which side the outward power goeth, thither do all the worldlings turne themselves. And because the beast condemneth the true worshippers of God to bee heretikes, and cruelly putteth them to death: they can see no further, but gather by and by that God is with the beast, and so fall downe and worship him, receiuing all his ordinances, his lawes, his decrees, and his doctrines as oracles from God, not calling any thing that he doth into question. Such force there is, I say, in the outward power to perswade the blind world, which see but according to the flesh. Wee are to note further in this verse, when he saith, that all the inhabitants of the earth do worship the beast, that by & by he restraineth it to the reprobate, saying, whose names are not written in the booke of life of the lambe, &c. Although the multitude bee exceeding great that receiue the religion of the beast, yea so great that the holie Ghost tearmeth them all the inhabitants of the earth: yet some are excepted, some doe renounce him, and that is all the elect, whose names are written in the book of life, he cannot seduce any one of them vnto damnation. This is a goodly comfort, that all his glorying of power, of multitude, of learning, or whatsoeuer, yea all his tyrannie against those which will not ascribe vnto him that which belongeth onely to God, cannot deceiue nor terrifie any one, no not euen the least of the elect, but onely the vngodly which proudly despise the holy doctrine of the Lord. Speaking of the holy election in Christ, (which he calleth the book of life of the lambe) he addeth that this lambe was killed from the beginning of the world. Christ was offered in sacrifice as the vnspotted lambe of God which taketh away the finnes of the world. And although hee was manifested in the flesh in the latter ende of the worlde, and not slaine before, yet because the holy patriarches, euen from Adam were saued by his blood: it is said, hee was killed from the beginning of the world. His death is also as effectuell now, and shall be vnto the worlds end, as it was when he did hang vpon the crosse. The redeemer by the lambe shall bee safe in the midst of all dangers.

It followeth now, If any man haue an eare, let him heare. This is to giue a note, that the things which are here vttered be mysticall: they are not to be vnderstood by the fleshly eare, but spiritually. If any man haue his eare opened by the holie Ghost, he may heare and vnderstand them: otherwise he cannot. For they whose eare God openeth vnderstand the mysteries of the prophetic, and they are cleere vnto them: but to the rest, that is, to the worldlings they be sealed vp, they can not heare nor vnderstand them, they shall worship the beast, ascribing vnto him diuine power and honor. After the description of the beast, and calling vpon such to heare, as haue an eare, he cometh to denounce iudgement and vengeance against this terrible

terrible monster. For shall his power defend and support him alwayes against the mightie reuenging hand of God? shall he neuer bee called to iudgement for his horrible blasphemies, and tyrannie? Yes verily, for here it is sayd, hee that leadech into captiuitie, shall goe into captiuitie: he that killeth with the sword, shall bee killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the Saints. The Iudge of the whole world is iust, and wil recompence euery one according to his deeds. This bloudie Romane Empire both former and latter, which hath so tyrannously oppressed the Church with bondage, and drawne infinite thousands into euerlasting captiuitie, shall also it selfe bee cast downe, and the vpholders thereof shall become the bondslauers of hell world without ende. They put to death with the sword the holy seruants of Christ: and the sword of Gods wrath shall kill them for euer. The Saints are with faith to beholde it, they are with patience to waite for it. For by faith wee are to behold cleerely, that the most righteous God will rescue and saue his afflicted seruants, and destroy their oppressors: and because in his holy wisdom he appoynteth the times and seasons, we must patiently waite for the same.



The 28. Sermon.

CHAP. 13.

- 11 *And I beheld another beast ascending out of the earth, hauing two hornes like a Lambe, but he spake like the dragon.*
- 12 *And he did all that the first beast could doe in his presence, and he causeth the earth and them that dwell therein, to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.*
- 13 *And he doth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come downe from heauen on the earth in the sight of men.*
- 14 *And he seduceth the inhabitants of the earth by the signes which he had giuen him to do in the sight of the beast, saying to the inhabitants of the earth, that they should make the image of the beast which had the wound of a sword and did live.*
- 15 *And it was giuen vnto him to giue a spirit to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast should speake, and should cause that as many as would not worship the beast should be killed.*
- 16 *And he made all both small and great, rich and poore, free and bond, to receiue a marke in their right hand, or in their foreheads.*
- 17 *And that no man might buy or sell, saue he that had the marke, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.*

18 Here

- 18 *Here is wisdom, let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man, and his number is sixe hundred, threescore and sixe.*



I had the description of the beast with seven heads, in the former part of this chapter: and now hee painteth out the beast with the two hornes like a Lambe, which also doth warre against the Saints. A beast, as wee haue seene, is a kingdome, a dominion, or a power exercised with tyrannous and beastly qualities. And by this beast with the two hornes, is the kingdome of the great Antichrist, euen the kingdome of the Papacie described. This beast is called the false prophet, chapter 19.

But here ariseth a great doubt at the first: for if the seven heads of the former beast, be seven seuerall states or gouernments, by which Rome hath ruled ouer the world: and that the Empire (which then stood when Iohn receiued this prophetic) was the sixt of those heads, and the monarchie of Popes the seuenth, which the Angell sayth was then to come, chapt. 17. why, or how shall the Papacie bee described againe vnder another beast? can that Empire of the Popes bee both the seuenth head of that former beast, and also a beast by himselfe? Yea verily that he is in respect of the double power which this second beast did challenge. For they, that is to say the Pope, challenge the highest power ciuill, ouer all Emperours and Kings, and the highest power spirituall ouer the faith, ouer the consciences and soules of al men: which power is peculiar to Christ, one is your doctour euen Christ, Mat. 23. So that this second Empire of Rome is set forth not onely as an head of the former beast, but also as a seuerall beast by it selfe. And this may as well bee, as that the Angell, chap. 17. sayth, that the head which was not then come, should bee both one of the seven and the eight. If he bee one of the seven, and also the eight, then is he somewhat besides an head of the beast, yea euen a seuerall beast by himselfe. But more of this when we come to that chapter.

Now let vs proceede to the description of this monster, which is not onely the seuenth head of the beast, but also for his differing power from all the rest, is also a seuerall beast by himselfe. Saint Iohn sayth that he saw him ascending out of the earth. Here is noted in this first clause, his originall, of what progenie or stocke he cometh, that the seruants of God may know what his dignitie is, how soeuer hee glorieth thereof. For the Papacie doth boast with full mouth that their dignitie and power is from heauen. They glorie and bragge that Christ gaue it to Peter, and that they haue it by succession from him. Thus I say they make their beast. But the holy Ghost telleth vs, that it ariseth out of the earth: for as that is right excellent and glorious which cometh from heauen, so that which springeth from the earth is vile base, and contemptible. Moreover, in the phrase of the holy Ghost, to say he ascendeth out of the earth, is as much to say, as that this beast is bred and springeth from the sensualitie of man, and from the very duell of hell. For S. Iames

joyneth

ioyneth these three together as agreeing in one, earthly, sensuall, and diuellish. Iam. 3. vers. 15. Let them then bragge while they can, that their power is from heauen, wee haue the cleere word of God that it is from the earth, it is of man, it is of the diuell.

In the next clause he sayth, This beast hath two hornes like a Lambe, but spake like the Dragon. Here is a great difference in this beast in deede and trueth, from that which he pretendeth in shew. For hee pretendeth and maketh shew as if hee were an innocent Lambe, and sayth that both his hornes (that is, the two powers which he challengeth euen the ciuill and the ecclesiasticall) are the hornes of the Lambe of God Christ Iesus: when as he hath receiued the sayd powers from the diuell, and in working is as the dragon, which is noted in these words, *but he spake like the dragon*. I might here stand to shew at large how the Popes of Rome since the time that they vsurped to be vniuersall Bishops, call themselves Christs Vicars, and affirme most stoutly that he hath committed into their hands both the temporall sword ouer all Emperours and Kings in the earth, to place and to displace at their will, and also the spirituall sword and power ouer all mens soules, to carrie to heauen, and to throw downe to hell at their pleasure. I might likewise stand to shew, that the Lambe indeede is king of kings, and Lord of Lords, and that he is our great high priest, and hath the lordship ouer the faith and conscience of men, and that he hath not resigned either of these powers to any, but sitting at the right hand of the highest maiestie doth exercise them himselfe, to the great ioy of all the faithfull. I might (I say) stand to handle these things at large, but it is sufficient onely to note them, seeing there haue neuer been any so blasphemous as to challenge these high powers which are peculiar to Christ, but the Popes which are the head and standerd bearers in the kingdome of the Papacie. And marke this well, how the Lord doth not say, that he hath indeede the two hornes of the Lambe, but two hornes like to the Lambe. For howsoeuer they bragge in the Papacie, that their kingly and priestly power doe bring sauing health vnto all that obediently submit themselves to the same (as being the hornes or powers of the Lambe of God committed vnto them) yet the holy Ghost to the end that the godly may not bee deceiued, sayth, they are but like the hornes of the Lambe, and that they be indeede the very hornes and powers of the diuell, for he doth speake like the dragon. Here againe is a large field, if we should runne through all particulars, to shew how the Romish beast boasting of Christs power, is no more but the mouth and instrument of the great red dragon the diuell, to blaspheme God and his trueth, to persecute his Church, to tread downe the holie worship, and to set vp the worship of Idols, yea to teach and establishe heresies, errors, and doctrines of diuels. O the Papacie make shew of hornes like a Lambe, but speake like the dragon. Wee must not then bee troubled with their vaine bragges, but looke what the pure word of God doth teach vs, and rest in that. Whosoever teacheth against that holy word, speaketh like the dragon.

It followeth, That he did all that the first beast could doe in his presence. Here is the great power of the Papacie and the efficacie thereof set foorth, that it is as mightie

mightie and performeth as much in the seruice of the dragon against God and his Church, as euer the Empire of the heathen and wicked Emperours could doe. This is much, if we consider both the maiestie, and power of the Empire before it receiued the deadly wound, and also what horrible things it did against God and his Church throwing downe the trueth, and setting vp Idolatrie, and murdering the holy seruants of Christ: and yet this second beast goeth as farre. Yea doubtles (as we shall see) he doth more, but the holy Ghost noteth first that he doth all that the former could doe. And he causeth the earth (sayth S. Iohn) and them that dwell therein, to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. These words doe minister a great doubt vnto some, how this second beast may represent the Papacie, seeing the Popes doe cause the inhabitants of the earth to worship themselves, and not to worship the heathen Emperours which were before them. This doubt is easily removed, if wee consider but two poynts. The one, that the beasts are not the men that ruled either in the Empire or in the Papacie, but the tyrannous power exercised by the men with cruell and beastly qualities. The other is, that albeit the power in the Papacie commeth vnder the name of Christ, and with other termes, as it were vnder another cloake, yet is it the very same in effect, or a liuely image of that which the Emperours did exercise. The heathen Emperours condemned the true worship of God, persecuted all those with cruell death which did embrace it, and set vp the worship of false gods, and doctrines of diuels. When that head had receiued a deadly wound, and was somewhat reuiued againe, the Papacie ariseth and reneweth all that former beastly tyrannie, impugneth the trueth of God, maintaineth the worship of Idols and doctrines of diuels. Now when the inhabitants of the earth are compelled to worship this beast, that is, to submit themselves to this vsurped tyranny, to embrace the lawes, the decrees, the religion and worship which it setteth vp, they doe indeede worship the olde Romane tyrannie, which is brought in againe by the Papacie. Indeede the Popes, and the papisme doe not allow of the old Romane tyrannie, but doe condemne it to be of the diuell, because it denied Christianitie, set vp the worship of false gods, and murdered the Saints: and yet they compell all men to worship that beast. If this shall seeme strange vnto any, let them consider that the holy Ghost doth not here teach what the second beast thinketh or intendeth, but what he doth: for Satan can so farre delude the blind hearts of men, that when their intents are to worship God, they worship diuels. If a man in the darke intendeth to set vpon his enemy to kill him, and vnawares in stead of his enemy killeth his owne father: shall we say that he hath not killed his father, but his enemy, because his intent was onely to kill his enemy and not his father? If wee confesse that to be absurd in the darknes of the bodily eyes: why shall we not confesse it to be as absurd in the darknes of the minde, to say a man worshippeth God, when he worshippeth diuels, because his intent is to worship God, and not diuels? Then seeing it is so, whatsoeuer the papists intend, because they bring in againe the old Romane tyrannie, they cause men to worship the former beast. They themselves are deceiued in their intents: for the holy Apostle S. Paul prophecying of them, sayth vnto

Timothie, that the euill men and deceiuers shall waxe worse and worse deceiuing, and being deceiued, 2. Timoth. 3. ver. 13. Let it be, they thinke they do right when they pray to Saints and Angels, and make them mediatours, and when they worship Images: yea let it be, they take it they doe God high seruice when they put to death all that will not obey their lawes: yet in truth they bring in Paganisme, and murder the Saints, The popes are worshipped, not as men, but for their power which they haue vsurped, which power is of the deuill, and so the former beast is worshipped in them, which the deuill set vp.

Then next it followeth, that this beast did great wonders, so that he maketh fire come downe from heauen in the sight of men, and deceiueth them that dwell on the earth by meanes of those signes which he hath power to doe in the sight of the beast. In these words, there be set forth vnto vs two things, the one is the signes and wonders which Antichrist shall worke: the other is the efficacie of those signes in seducing the blind worlde. Our Sauour saith, that the false prophets should arise and worke such signes and wonders, that if it were possible the very elect should be deceiued, Matth. 24. And Saint Paul shewing the comming of the great Antichrist saith, his comming shall be by the efficacie of Satan, with all power, & signes, and lying wonders, 2. Thess. 2. Here is then the proper marke of the kingdome of Antichrist, lying signes and wonders.

Now that we may see how fitly this agreeth to the papisme, let vs call to minde how they that are for that bloody kingdome do boast of their miracles, their signes, and wonders. Their *Legenda aurea*, their festiualls, and other their writings do set forth infinite miracles and wonders, which they say were wrought to confirme their religion. As some for purgatorie and prayer for the dead, some for the reall presence of Christ in the sacrament, to shew that the bread and wine are turned into his very flethe and bloud: but most plentifull are their miracles which were wrought for those that were very deuout in worshipping of Saints, and their Images. All is miracles, miracles, among the papists, and all but lying signes. S. John nameth one wonder here which is this, namely, that the beast causeth fire to come downe from heauen in the sight of men. The great Prophet of God Elias, as wee read, caused fire to come downe and to consume the captaines and their fifties which were sent from the king of Israell to fetch him. Likewise at his prayer the fire came downe and consumed the sacrifice, when the priests of Baal could not doe the like. But where doe we find that any such thing hath been done in the poperie? I answer, that it is not the meaning of the holy Ghost, that this beast, the kingdome of Antichrist, shall in very deed haue power to cause fire to come down from heauen: but in the opinion of the blind world he hath as great power as had Elias. For as the fire came downe from heauen at the prayer of Elias in the sight of the people, to confirme that to be the true worship of God which he maintained, and to proue the worship of Baal to be false and wicked: so partly by counterfeit miracles, and partly by some strange things done by the power of Satan, the world hath verily beleued that this beast the papacie, or those popish prelates had as great power to worke miracles as euer had Elias, both to confirme their religion

to bee true, and also to condemne the worship of those which withstand the same. Then we see the reason, why the efficacie of Satan to worke wonders in the poperie, is compared to fire comming downe from heauen in the sight of men, euen because the whole controuersie betweene Elias and the Prophets of Baal was decided by that fire which came downe to shewe whether part had the true religion. We may note then what a great aduantage the Romish beast taketh to seduce the blind world: As thus, when religion was in question in the dayes of Elias, the controuersie was decided by the fire that came downe from heauen, in so much that all the people fell vpon their faces and cryed, Ichouah hee is God, Ichouah hee is God. Read the historie, 1. king. chap. 18.

Now this beast the papacie came in, in time past euen as if he had been an other Elias, saying vnto all that withstood him, let it bee tried by miracles, whether part hath the true religion. The holy and true worshippers of God make answer, our religion is expressly deliuered in the word of God, it is fully confirmed by the miracles of Christ and his Apostles, wee worke no miracles to confirme that which is already confirmed. This I say, is the answer of Gods true seruants. Then cried out the popish rout, we haue miracles wrought in our Church to confirme all that we doe: Behold all people, and ye shall see. Then came the effectuell power of Satan to doe some strange things which seeme wonderfull vnto the ignorant. Then downe fell the inhabitants of the earth wondering at these lying signes and wonders, nothing doubting but that the beast can cause fire to come downe from heauen, not onely this materiall fire, but the fire of Gods wrath to consume all his aduersaries, both the captaines and their fifties. Thus hath Antichrist seduced the world with the power of his signes and wonders, and caused them to murder the true seruants of God as no better then the priests of Baal, that could work no miracle to confirme their worship.

Now the world commeth to be at the commandement of Antichrist, whome they take to haue so great power to confirme all that hee doth with miracles from heauen. And now he hath gotten them vnder, he layeth his commaundement vpon them, saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make the image of the beast which had the wound of a sword and did liue, for so it followeth in the text, Here is a matter of some difficultie to be well vnderstood. Wee are sure that the holy ghost doth hereby declare that antichrist enlargeth & spreadeth his power by causing this image to be made. But what is this image of the beast, there lieth the difficultie.

The sixth head of the beast, that is the Empire, so farre as it was tyrannous and beastly, had receiued a deadly wound when Constantine imbraced and defended the faith of Christ. After also the Empire was rent in peeces, so that there was the Emperor of the East, and the Emperor of the West. The Empire of the West fell quite downe, so that for the space of three hundred years and more, there was no Emperour of the West, vntill the Bishop of Rome Leo the third, made Charles the great the king of France, Emperour. Now here was an Empire of the West againe erected, but not of such maiestie and power as the old Romane Empire had been.

What shall we take this to bee the image of the beast whose deadly wound was healed? I see not how that can be, because the Empire is the beast, for the beast still remaineth though not in like power y^t it was before, for this second beast doth al that he doth in the presence of the former beast, which cannot bee both the beast and the image of the beast. Therefore the setting vp of the Empire, cannot bee the making the image. What then, where shall we find this image of the former beast, euen in the presence of the beast, and that in the papacie. For substance of matter, as I haue noted before, the papacie hath set vp the olde Romane tyrannie which was in the heathen Emperours against the true worship of God, and against his Church, and hath brought in the doctrine & worship of deuils. And now Saint Iohn sheweth, that as they set vp the same matter in effect; so likewise they erect an externall forme of their ecclesiasticall gouernment, after the very patterne and forme of the gouernment of the old Empire, yea so like, that it is called an image of the same. It shall suffice to shew this in a few things.

As first, behold the policie or forme of gouernment of the ancient Roman Empire, which seemed to bee an aristocratic because there was a Senate: there were graue Senators, which seemed to haue high authoritie, but yet in very deed it was a monarchie, yea a cruell tyrannie, in as much as they were all vnder the rule of one man, the Emperour who bare the sway. In like mannerye may behold in the papacie the like forme, yea the perfect image of that policie; for there is at Rome the high Senate, the colledge of Cardinals, which take the vpper hand of kings, which also seeme to holde the power of an Aristocratic, but they also are all of them subiect to one monarch, to one head, which is the pope that ruleth ouer them, and ordereth all things at his pleasure as a God vpon earth, for they all as his vassals extoll his power, and affirme that he cannot erre, neither as they say, is he to be iudged of any.

Then further in the ancient Romane Empire, the heathen Emperours tooke vpon them not onely the highest kingly power and Empire ouer all men, but also the priesthood & power ouer religion: and more ouer to be the tribunes of the people, which had the power of forbidding and disanulling all decrees made by other magistrates. We haue the very true image of this in the papacie, while the popes haue vsurped the highest ciuill power ouer all kings and Emperours, the fulnes of authoritie of the priesthood to rule ouer religion, and as the high tribunes of the people to be exempted from all iurisdiction, and to disanull the decrees of all other Bishops, yea of generall councils if they be not ratified by them. Doe wee not here see the very image of the old Romane Empire, although I should goe no further in this matter? But now as the head ouer all, that is, the Emperour, was at Rome, and the Senate which next vnto him were the highest, so were there in all lands (so farre as the Empire did reach) presidents and great rulers ouer prouinces, which had all their authoritie from the Emperour, and were as his sworne men, at his becke and commandement. At Rome also hath beene and is the head ouer all in the papacy, euen the wonder of the worlde, the pope whome they extoll as a God vpon earth, and there also is the high Senate the colledge of Cardinals, and according to the old

old patterne this Monarch had in all kingdomes (so farre as the papacie did reach) his great presidents ouer prouinces, which were all of them his sworne men, and had their whole power from him, euen the mightie prelates, which were able to iustle with kings. I might here also stand to shewe, how the poperie hath set vp againe that externall forme of worship which the idolatrous Romanes of olde vsed about their Idols, with candles, with holy water, with processions, and with a great number of other things, which they vse in their chiefe solemnities: but this little may suffice.

Wherefore to conclude this point, as the second beast hath in substance of matter set vp the former beast to be worshipped, whilest he bringeth in againe that old tyrannie against the Church, that oppressing and condemning the true worship of God, and that erecting of idolatrie and worship of deuils, euen the same, though not vnder the same tearmes: so likewise hath he in his spirituall tyrannie, framed his hierarchie, after the very forme of the auncient Romane policie, and so hath set vp the liuely image of the former beast. Thus may ye see what the image of the former beast is, here erected. Yet there remaineth one doubt, for it is sayd that this beast with two hornes like a lambe, willethe the inhabitants of the earth to make the Image of the former beast. When as the popes themselues did vsurpe to haue that highest power in all things as the heathen Emperours had, and to haue all gouerned according to that forme of gouernment which was in the Empire, how can it be said that the inhabitants of the earth make the image? Doth not the beast himselfe make it? yea, but this is to be answered that the kings of the earth, and the people their subiects giue their consent, or else it could not haue beene. For if the malignant church, the Synagogue of Antichrist, that Romish clergie, had not seduced the kings and the people with the power of their lying wonders, and made them beleue that they could bring downe fire from heauen vpon their enemies, they might haue required this image to be made, but not haue obtained it. But now it might arise in a mans mind thus, an Image is but a dead shewe of a thing, and can doe nothing. The holy Ghost doth preuent this obiection, and sheweth that it becometh more then a dead or an idle Image: for he saith, the beast had power giuen him to put a spirite into the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast should speake, and should cause, that as many as would not worship the beast should be killed. Here is a wonderfull Image, that hath life put into it, and power to doe so great matters. The popish hierarchie is not a bare resemblance of the old Romane policie to stand as a picture in a wall, but hath a spirite put into it by the false prophet (which is the whole bodie of all the false teachers in that Romish apostasie) and spreadeth it selfe and speaketh with such power in all kingdomes, that it causeth all such to be put to death, as will not worship the beast. Who knoweth not this? that as many as would not in al countries imbrace the whole popery (and so in trwth worship that old tyrannie which maintained idolatrie) the popish hierarchie whereof the pope is the top, then his Cardinals, then his great prelates, inquisitors, and other officers did speake and condemne them as heretikes, deliuering them ouer being condemned to the secular power, to bee put to death. And wee

know that the kings then durst not but put them to death, least it should light vpon themselves. Thus were the poore sheepe of Christ killed by the mightie power of this image, and looke into those kingdomes where the parts of it yet remaine, and ye shall see how it oppresseth the Church. This is very much, but the beast is not yet satisfied, but will haue all sorts of people brought into bondage vnto him, as his marked seruants. Yea, as men vse to set a brand vpon their sheepe and other cattell, and to eare marke them, that it may openly and manifestly appeare to whom they appertaine: so dooth Antichrist this Romish beast, cause all men in all kingdomes to carry in open view his marke or brand, whereby all may see that they doe appertaine vnto him. For thus it followeth in the text, And hee made all both small and great, rich and poore, free and bond, to receiue a marke in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, saue he that had the marke or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

Then we see that among the people there is none so small, or so base, either man or woman, whom Antichrist doth neglect, but will haue them marked and branded. Among the Kings, the Princes, the Dukes and Nobles, there is not one so great, or so high, but hee must stoop to receiue this brand: seeing hee causeth all both small and great to receiue it. There is no man which by the abundance of his riches and worldly wealth, can buy out this matter. There is not the poorest begger that shall be let go. All free men must be bond to him: and bond men besides their masters according to the flesh, must haue a spirituall Lord. None of all these shall be permitted to traffique in the world, or to be conuersant among men, vnles the marke appeare vpon them, either in their foreheads or in their right hands. Their hand is put for their actions, and the forehead for their open profession, and in one of them at the least, every man must openly declare that he acknowledgeth the Pope of Rome to bee the Lord ouer his faith. Is there any man which dooth doubt of the truth of this, I meane that this was in euery respect fully performed in the Papacie? Doe not all that be of any yeares know, that so many of all sortes whatsoever, as did not openly professe the Pope to bee their Lord, yea euen in Christs stead, Lord and head ouer the whole Church, were cruelly put to death? Could any, I pray you, which would not doe this, bee suffered to buy and sell, or to be conuersant among men? Goe now into Spayne and see how you can liue there: where a part of the image of the beast yet standeth. I call it but a part of the image, not because it is not as an whole image, but because the image of the beast is called but one in all kingdomes so farre as it was spread, and in sundrie kingdomes it is broken downe.

It may here bee demaunded, whether all these three bee put for one, the marke of the beast, his name, and the number of his name? I take it they are not all one, but that the marke is a more speciall thing then his name or the number of his name. For who knoweth not, that some were more neerely marked vnto the Pope, or with a more speciall brand then others? All the Laitie (as they called them) bare his name, or the number of his name, and did professe their humble submission vnto all his decrees, did worship him as their spirituall Lord that had the

the power ouer the spirituall life, and death. But his clergie of all sorts, as his Cardinals, his Bishops, his Abbots, his Monkes, Friers, Nunnes, and Votaries, had speciall markes, and were most neerely bound vnto him. Then wee see it is not in vaine that the holy Ghost maketh a difference of the marke, seeing all are branded, but not all alike: but some besides the common marke, haue also their seuerall and speciall marke. Thus we see that all sorts of people become as the marked or branded cattell of the beast, and must be subiect to his will.

The Papists thinke they put a great question vnto vs, when they say, where was your Church an hundreth yeares past? To answer this, aske them where the true Church of Christ was, when the second beast, the beast with two hornes like a Lambe, did cause all both small and great, rich and poore, free and bond, to receiue the marke of the beast, and that none might buy or sell but such? were they not persecuted, condemned as heretikes, and murdered in all lands, which would not become his marked seruants? What can be more cleere then this? What true Church of Christ should wee looke for, all the time that this beast raigneth, but a persecuted, scattered remnant? And what dooth the vniuersalitie, the multitude and consent of so many kingdomes submitting themselves to the Papacie, and worshipping the Pope and his decrees, but plainly declare that they bee the very malignant Church, the synagogue of Antichrist here painted out? Reade all ancient histories of things that were done in the times of poperie, and see what one thing can bee found which dooth not in all respects most fitly agree with the description of this second beast? Reade how they haue been vsed in all countries within the popish dominion, which haue denied to imbrace the popish idolatrous religion, and see whether they doe not likewise in all respects agree with the state of the true Church here described in this booke. Then if it be so, that the Romish synagogue the papisme, euen that idolatrous kingdome, doe so fitly and fully agree with the description of this second beast, and that the true Church oppressed by them, should al that while be but as a scattered remnant persecuted and slaine, why should they aske where our Church was? It was persecuted, oppressed, and scattered by the Romish beast: they condemned and cruelly murdered all the true worshippers of God that they could lay holde of: for they cause all to bee put to death that will not worship the image of the beast.

Now last of all S. Iohn commeth to shew what the number of the name of this beast is: for if wee come to know his name, what would we desire more. But the holy Ghost will not tell his name plainly, but mystically, as other things in this booke, that the worldlings which shall fulfill them may not see them, and yet the faithful seruants of God doe attaine to the knowledge of them. Therefore he saith, here is wisdom, let him that hath vnderstanding count the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, that is, such as a man may be able to finde out. And then he sayth it is sixe hundreth, sixtie, and sixe. The sillables of his name shall not bee set downe, but the letters of his name being numbred, are in number as they signifie put all together, sixe hundreth, sixtie, and sixe. Here the papists doe laugh, saying, that there be many names to bee found both proper and common, whose

letters being numbred doe amount to this number 666. and therefore no certaintie can bee had that way. Also they say no one Pope can bee named, the letters of whose name make that number. These papists herein are most grosse and absurd: for we are not here to inquire about the name of any man, but about the name of a kingdome, for the beast is a kingdome. And what is the name of the Romane Empire, and the name of the popish hierarchie? Are they not the Latines? The Popes of Rome are all for Latine, and will haue no exercise of religion but in Latine. They condemne the Greeke Church, because it will not bee subiect to their Latine lawes. They compell all men to pray in Latine. And touching the Bible, whereas the olde Testament was written in the Hebrue tongue by the Prophets, and the new Testament in Greeke by the Apostles and Euangelists, they condemne the same, being the originall, as corrupted, and will haue the Bible to bee authentike in no tongue but in the Latine. I might proceede in moe particulars: but who knoweth not that the papacie is the kingdome of the Latines? What then will some say? what is this for the number of his name? Thus it is, S. Iohn wrote this Reuelation in Greeke, and the Greeke word *Latynos*, which signifieth Latine, containeth the number sixe hundreth sixtie and sixe. The beast is a kingdome, and the Papacie is the kingdome of the Latines: what other Monarchie can bee shewed since this Reuelation was giuen, the letters of whose name containe this foresayd number? *Irenaus* an ancient father of the Church, yea so ancient that he reporteth, that hee sawe and heard *Polycarpus*, who was one that was a discipule of S. Iohn that receiued this prophecie, mentioneth this word *Latynos* as the name of the beast. Also wee may note, that as the letters of the Greeke word *Latynos* being numbred doe amount to 666. so doe the letters of the Latine *Ecclesia Italica*, that is, the Church of Italie, and the letters of the Hebrue word *Romayth*, which signifieth Romane. This is much that it fitteth in all the three principall tongues, the Hebrue, the Greeke and the Latine. Some doe like better that the number of his name should be referred to the time of his comming, as that hee should come about the yeare sixe hundreth sixtie and sixe: but that cannot agree with the words of the text, that all should receiue the marke of the beast, or his name, or the number of his name. Men professing poperie carrie not the number of the yeare in which Antichrist did come, but they professe themselves to be of the Latine kingdome, to be of the Italian Church, to bee of the Romish religion: and so carrie his name and the number of his name. Thus much for this time.

The



The 29. Sermon.

CHAP. 14.

- 1 And I look'd, and behold a Lambe stood vpon mount Sion, and with him an hundreth and foure and fourtie thousand, hauing his fathers name written in their foreheads.
- 2 And I heard a voyce from heauen as the sound of many waters, and as the sound of a great thunder, and I heard the voyce of harpers, harping with their harpes.
- 3 And they did sing as it were a new song, before the throne, and before the foure beasts and the Elders: and no man could learne that song but the hundreth, fourtie and foure thousand, which were bought from the earth.
- 4 These are they which are not defiled with women, for they are virgins, these follow the Lambe whither soeuer he goeth, these are bought from men, being the first fruites to God and to the Lambe.
- 5 And in their mouthes was found no guile, for they are without spot before the throne of God.



IN the two former chapters the 12. and 13. wee haue had the description of the enemies to the true spouse of Christ, the holy Church: as in the 12. chapter there is painted out the great red dragon the diuell himselfe with all his Angels: and in the 13. chapter the beast with seuen heads, and the beast with two hornes like a Lambe. Now in this chapter here is first set forth her protector and defender against those huge monsters, and then afterward their decay and ruine. And I looked (sayth S. Iohn) and behold a Lambe stood vpon mount Sion. In the dayes of the great Antichrist they were killed that would not worship the beast, and no man might buy or sell saue he that had the marke, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name: and this was ouer many nations, kindreds and tongues. Where then was the true Church? did she vterly faile in the earth? as the papists say vnto vs, where was your Church an hundreth yeares past? The spouse of Christ did not faile vpon the earth euen in the middest of those grieuous times: for here is still a mount Sion, that is, a true Church in the world, here is a Lambe standing vpon the same as her protector, and here be many thousands of pure worshippers her true children, which are not defiled with the idolatrous worship of Antichrist. They

They condemne them as heretikes, persecute and kill them, but they can neuer cause them to forsake the truth. Thus much is here plainly set before vs.

But this is strange that a lambe is here set forth to be the defender of the church against those mightie enemies. What a mighty huge monster is the great red dragon? Of what marueilous power is the beast with seuen heads, and likewise the beast with two hornes? what is a lambe vnto all these? Yes this lambe is too strong for them all: for hee is the lambe of God that taketh away the sinnes of the world. He is throughly able though he be a lambe to defend his church against those monsters, though they were ten thousand times stronger then they be. But seeing this lambe in the fift chapter of this booke, is called the lyon of the tribe of Iuda: it may be demaunded whether he might not in this place more fitly appeare in the shape of a lyon to encounter with those mightie enemies. It is out of doubt that our Lord Iesus is called a lion in respect of his terrible power wherewith he doth teare down his enemies. But wee must note withall, that the greatnes of his power against the deuill and all his instruments hath shewed it selfe as hee is a lambe, yea the lambe slaine in sacrifice: for it is the power of his death that vanquisheth, and the church hath her victorie through his blood. So that it is indeed a lambe that ouercometh these terrible enemies, and protecteth his chosen. They ouercame him by the blood of the lambe, chap. 12. vers. 11. And marke well how it is said, that this lambe standeth vpon mount Sion: for albeit he bee in bodie ascended vp into heauen, yet he said, behold I am with you, euen to the ende of the world. Why then doth the pope bragge that all power ouer the whole Church in earth is committed into his hand, and that he is in Christs stead? Ye see Christ is not absent, that hee needeth a vicar to supply his roome and office. The Church hath the lambe that was slaine present with her, by whom she doth ouercome. Thus much for the protector, now for the protected. And with him (saith the text) an hundreth and foure and fortie thousand. This is that number which are sealed before in the seuenth chapter. It is a number certaine, for an vncertaine: for it is not the purpose of the holy Ghost to teach vs that the Lord Iesus did preserue iust so many thousands in the dayes of Antichrist, but that when there seemed to be few or none, yet the Lord preserued many thousands. As Elias sayd to God, Lord they haue digged downe thine Altars, and killed thy prophets, and I am left alone. But the Lord made him this answer, I haue reserved to my selfe seuen thousand in Israel which haue not bowed the knee to Baal. Elias (as it appeareth) sawe fewe or none, and yet there were a great number. So in the dayes of poperie when they killed all those which would not worship the beast, few appeared, but yet the Lord preserued many thousands scattered in the kingdomes and great nations, ouer which the Romish Antichrist had gotten the dominion. An hundreth foure and fortie thousand are a great number, and these are sayd to be of the tribes of Israel: and it seemeth that this number is put for a farre greater. It may then bee obiected, that so great a multitude could not but appeare and make some shewe, yea a farre greater shewe then ever was made in the dayes of poperie, by those that withstood it. To this I answer, that looke but into our owne land, which is but a smal countrie in comparison of some

other,

other, and see when there is mustering of souldiers, a man or two out of a parish which are not missed, & may seeme to be little, yet when they come together they make a great armie of many thousands: So the true worshippers of the Lord scattered thinne in many great kingdomes, set all together make a goodly compaignie.

Moreover, besides the largenes of the kingdomes in which they be scattered, wee must also note the length of the time: For the poperie was in the strength and did flourish foure or fife hundredth yeares: in this time a few at once amount to a great number, being gathered out of so many nations. Howsoeuer the marked seruants of Antichrist despise this scattered remnant, bragging of their infinite millions of millions, yea of so many thousand thousands, almost as here bee persons, yet this small number (small I call it in comparison of their innumerable heapes of people) shall be found to be the true Catholike Church, and their multitude the Synagogue of Satan whom they doe worship. This booke doth plainly shewe that the true Church is farre lesse in number then the false Church, and that the false Church shall preuaile in the world against the true seruants of God, and murder them: what do they then boast of their strength and multitude? Doth it not make against them? yes verily. It is also here to bee noted, that howsoeuer the true worshippers be dispersed and scattered one from another here in the world, yet they meet all together in the vnitie of faith, & are ioyned to the lambe their head. Our papists contend for a visible bodie in the world, or els it cannot be the church of Christ: As now at this day since the disclosing of Antichrist there bee many visible assemblies that doe profess the gospel. But how could there be such assemblies in the dayes when the kings and their subiects did worship the beast, and those which refused to worship him were put to death? True it is that in some places, there were some companies of those which professed the Gospell, and which condemned the doctrine of the church of Rome to be Antichristian: who the Romish beast with all his power could not subdue, as the histories do shew of the Bohemians, and of those whom they call the Waldenses. The Lord had many scattered people in this our countrie of England also, which embraced the true doctrine, & refused to worship the beast, but especially in the dayes of Wickliffe, and certaine yeares after.

Then it followeth, Hauing his fathers name written in their foreheads. As the children of the malignant Church, which are called the inhabitants of the earth, haue the marke of the beast in their foreheads, or in their right hands, euen the name or the number of his name: so the pure and holy worshippers on the contrary part haue written in their foreheads, the name of the Lord God, who is the father of the lambe. What is this, but that as the seruants of Antichrist are not ashamed openly to beare his marke and to profess his religion: so these are not ashamed of the holy religion and worship of God, but doe openly profess it before men. It is great reason that this should be so: nay it is a very absurd thing, that the popish sort should glory in the name of the pope, and openly reioyce in the profession of his wicked inventions, euē in the worship of deuils, & that on the contrary part, the true worshippers should be ashamed of the name of God, that is, of his gospell, of his religi-

on

on and true worship: and therefore it is sayd here, his fathers name is written in their foreheads. Ye haue many which are time seruers, that wil say they keepe their conscience to God, when as outwardly they doe ioyne with false worship. They beare openly and outwardly to the view of the worlde the marke of the beast, and are ashamed to beare openly the name of God, that is, the profession of his holy truth, which condemneth all false worship; but say they carrie that secretly in their conscience, which they say is enough, seeing God looketh vpon the heart. Let such men learne out of this scripture, that notwithstanding all the tyrannie of Antichrist, the true worshippers doe carry the profession of his religion, as openly to the view of the world, as the other doe carry the the marke and name of the beast. Yea moreouer aske such men whether it be tolerable, that the seruants of God shuld be more ashamed of his name, then the seruants of Antichrist are ashamed of his? Shall God haue lesse honour then the deuill? Let them also remember that our Sauour doth not say he will deny them, and be ashamed of them that shall denie him, and be ashamed of him before his father in their heart and conscience: but he saith he will denie them, and be ashamed of them, which are ashamed of him, and denie him before men, Math. 10. vers. 32. 33. Whosoever will be of this companie which are with the lambe vpon Mount Sion, they must not be ashamed to haue it written in their forehead, y they profess y doctrine of God deliuered vnto vs in the scriptures of the Apostles and prophets, & that they vtterly renounce al idolatrie and false religion, brought in by the Romish Antichrist. Now as I said, there be many which in the times of persecution, will lend their bodily presence to the Idoll seruice and worship of deuils, flattering themselves in this, that they keepe their conscience free to God, professing the faith of Christ secretly to themselves, but dare not beare his fathers name written in their foreheads: so are there not a few euen in the daies that the gospel is maintained by Christian princes, which carry themselves so close and so warily, that a man shall not discern what religion they be of, or which part they fauour. There is strife and contention, one part for the holy doctrine of God, and an other for the Romish inuentions, and these men are loath to displease either part, and so swim betweene two streames. How will such bee bolde to carrie the fathers name written in their foreheads in the heate of persecution, which dare not in the daies of peace, when the power of their prince maintaineth the gospel openly and boldly professie the same?

Well, to conclude this point, let vs remember, that these hundreth, fourtie and foure thousand which are with the lambe vpon Mount Sion, haue his fathers name written in their foreheads. If we make account to bee of this companie, that is, if we will be true worshippers, and cleaue vnto Christ in his Church, euen vpon Sion his holy hill, then must we not bee ashamed openly to professie the holy doctrine and pure worship of God, both in time of peace, and in time of persecution. Wee must disdain to see the marked seruants of the beast carrie his name, and wee our selues ashamed of the truth of Christ. Let vs honor the Lord our God, as much as they honour the beast, and the dragon, which hath giuen his power and throne to the beast.

Let

Let vs now goe forward with that which followeth in the text: And I heard a voice from heauen, as the sound of many waters, and as the sound of a great thunder, and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps. Here is set forth how this companie of true worshippers doe magnific and praise God for his great benefites and graces bestowed vpon them. This is out of all doubt to declare, that do the dragon what he, and when the beast the dragons vicar that Romish pope hath spent all his power and policie to roote out all true worshippers, yet God wil haue a companie in earth that shall praise and glorifie his name: he will be worshipped in earth among the sonnes of men. For we must remember that the chiefe end of our creation and redemption is, that we should glorifie, and extoll the praise of the creator and redeemer. The deuill laboureth to haue all worship him, and that there shuld none remaine to praise the true and liuing God vpon the earth: but the Lord withstandeth his practise herein, and reserueth at all times a remnant, at sometimes more, and at sometimes lesse, which call vpon his name in truth, and glorifie him with praise and thanksgiuing. And this is it which Saint Iohn vttereth here, when hee sayth, hee heard a voyce from heauen, as the sound of many waters, and as the sound of a great thunder, and the voyce of harpers, harping with their harpes. But it may here be said, if this companie with the lambe vpon Mount Sion, doe represent the faithful here in the world, whom the lambe doth preserue in the times that the great Antichrist doth raigue and lay wast the Church: how then is this voyce heard from heauen? Is not this song of praise vttered vpon earth? I answere, that howsoeuer the Church bee vpon the earth as a pilgrime for a time, yet her birth is from heauen, her conuersation is in heauen, her inheritance is in heauen, shee is taught from heauen to praise and glorifie her God. In these respects the voice and sound of her praising God may be said to bee from heauen, although it bee vttered vpon the earth. Ierusalem (sayth S. Paul) which is from aboue, is free, which is the mother of vs all.

Then further, here be three comparisons to expresse the sound of this praise, the first, that it is like the confused roing noyse of many waters: the second, that it is as the terrible noyse of a mightie thunder: the third, that there is the sweete melodie of harpers, harping or playing vpon their harpes. What these things do meane is somewhat difficult to find: for they are expounded by diuers, after a diuerse manner. If we take it that the sound is al one in it self, & the difference to be as the person that heareth it, differeth or altereth his estate, the it is thus: A meere natural man heareth nothing whe the praises of God are sounded forth but as the confused noyse of many waters: When the same partie hath his eares opened by the gracious worke of the spirit, and seeth his owne vnthankfulness and misery, then the sound of the word, and the praises vttered by the Church, are as a terrible thunder: but after a more through and sound conuersion all is sweete and pleasant, as most delectable musicke. Doubtlesse these things are most true in many: and it may be, this scripture is to signifie so much. But if we will rather apply it both to the parties that vtter the voyce, and to the seuerall exercises of the Church, then it is to be taken thus: waters doe signifie (as the Angell sheweth chap. 7.) multitudes, tongues, and kinreds of people.

people. So the noyse of many waters, may very well be here taken, that the voyce of this prayse is the voyce of a multitude gathered out of many kindreds, nations, tongues and people: For the Lord gathereth his elect out of many kingdomes and nations. And albeit they bee seuered by seas and distance of places, yet they meete together in the vnitie of faith in their head Christ. Yea, howsoeuer their languages doe differ, yet like as many waters meeting together they make but one sound, and in this respect that the substance and summe of their seuerall voyces is all one, euen the magnifying the praise of God, and the vttering his truth, it is sayd, that their voyce is as the sound of many waters.

Then for the second, that it is as the voyce of a great thunder, it may very well represent the terrible iudgements & threatnings which the seruants of God do denounce against the wicked corrupters of his holy worship. Although the ministers of Antichrist, and the vngodly worldlings doe heare it with deaffe eares, yet is it indeede as a most terrible thunder. In the last place the sweete melodie of the harpers, doth shew with what spirituall ioy and gladnes the true beleeuers doe praise God. To praise God is nothing, vnles a man take great ioy, delight, and pleasure therein. In the time of the law God appoynted that his people should praise him in the publike assemblies with all manner of sweete instruments of musicke: what shall we imagine that God is delighted with the sweete noyse and harmonie of Instruments? That were most foolish, if we should thinke so, seeing his ioyes are in himselfe and infinit: but it was to shewe indeede that the heart and minde of man must ioy and reioyce in praising the Lord: As Saint Paul requireth of the Christians, that they make melodie in their hearts to the Lord. It is a place wortie great and deepe consideration: for it may teach vs that when men doe vtter the praises of God, if it be only with a pleasure in the voyce, and for custome and fashion, it is a dead thing, not pleasing to God at all. But if we delight and ioy in glorifying and praising God, so that it is euen like sweete and pleasant musicke to our hearts: then doe we praise him indeede with his Saints, and that is pleasing vnto him. Oh how men delight to heare the praise of those whom they loue: if yee loue the Lord, let your heart and tongue agree to magnific his praise, and reioyce in his honour. The diuell applieth all his might and force to destroy the praise of God, and therefore seeketh by all meanes to draw aside the hearts of men from reioicing in the Lord. Wee see the perturbations, and distempered affections that many are in, whereby, vpon euery light occasion, euen as at the wagging of a straw, they are tormented, and disquiet others, so that they cannot reioyce in the Lord, and with glad hearts sing forth his praise: but rather doe murmur. Wee must take heede of that, and seeke to haue our harpes wel tuned, that is our hearts, that euen with sweete and pleasant harmonie, they may sound forth the praises of God. The same diuell also who corrupteth whatsoeuer he can, draweth the melodie from the heart into the mouth onely: for some looke onely to the outward tune, and are delighted with the skill of that: they chaunt and make a pleasant noyse to the outward eare, but the strings of the heart are not tuned, there is no spirituall delight in praising God, and what doe such but euen bellow?

It

It followeth, And they did sing as it were a new song before the throne, and before the foure beasts and the Elders. As S. Iohn told vs of the melodie of harpers, so now he addeth, that they did also sing as it were a new song, which also is to declare with what gladnes and mirth of heart, the faithfull doe sound forth the praise of Gods glorie. Men doe vse for to sing when they bee merrie and glad, as the Apostle sayth, *Is any merrie, let him sing Psalmes.* And it is to bee considered that he sayth, their song was as a new song. Wee know that a song doth delight most when it is new, and lesse as it waxeth common, and, as we say, stale. The praising of God by the faithfull is most auncient and continuall, and yet they continue it with such delight, as if it were still new. For if men vpon a custome or common fashion vtter the praises of God, without feeling of ioy and gladnes in the same, it is euen as a stale song. Therefore the godly receiuing daily new benefits, doe still renew their song, that it remaineth as fresh and pleasant as at the first, it neuer waxeth olde in the motions and affections of their minde. This is it that the holie Prophet Dauid so often calleth for, saying, Sing to the Lord a new song, cheerefully praise the Lord. Here is then no more expressed in this place to be done by the Church, then that which the holy Ghost alwayes called vpon the seruants of God for to performe. We must then make account that it is our part and dutie to ioyne with them, and to take more delight in setting forth the praise of God, then in all earthly ioyes: wee ought to make it euen as the top and crowne of our pleasures: wee must goe cheerefully vnto it both in priuate by our selues, and also in the publike assemblies. Behold then his benefits and louing kindnes towards vs, that we may alwayes reioyce and triumph in his most holy name.

It is said that they sing this new song before the throne, before the foure beasts, and before the Elders. Although the praises be vttered by the Church vpon earth, yet the sweete harmonic of their harpes and song commeth vp into the heavens before the throne of God, and before his holy Angels, in as much as the Lord heareth their praise, and it is pleasing vnto him, and also all the holy Angels and Saints do reioyce in the glorifying of God. It is the whole delight of the blessed heavenly spirits to praise the Lord, and to heare his praises vttered by men. It is euen the sweetest melodie and song that can be vnto them. We doe not reade of any praise offered vp by the faithfull in all this booke vnto any Angell or Saint, but onely to him that sitteth vpon the throne, and to the Lambe: for none is to be with him partaker of his worship and glorie: none is wortie to bee ioyned with him: he is God alone. The ministers of Antichrist cry out vpon vs as aduersaries to the holy Angels, to the blessed Virgin, and to the Apostles and Martyrs, that we refuse to call vpon them, or any way to ascribe vnto them that which is peculiar to God and to his Christ. They imagine that they haue them on their sides, and that they be set against vs because of this: As their popish bookes are full of tales what such or such a Saint did for those that were their deuout worshippers. If it were so, doubtles wee should bee in an heauie case to haue all the heavenly companie against vs. But it is farre otherwise: for the Angels and the Saints in heaven haue their whole ioy in this that God is glorified, they delight not in horrible sacrilege, that

that is, that the glorie which belongeth onely to God, should be giuen vnto them. Nay, they are against all those which doe not together with them, worship onely the great God.

It is added further, That no man could learne that song but the hundreth, fourtie and foure thousand which were bought from the earth. What language then might this song be vttered in, that none can learne it but the redeemed? Is there any tongue peculiar to them in which they sing praises to God? Wee must note that he speaketh not here of the outward voyce, or sound of words: for what forme of praise is there, or in what language, but some or other euē of the enemies of God, as it falleth to be in their tongue, can learne it? But this song is to bee vnderstood of the ioyfull praising of God in the heart, it is the spiritual ioy, or the ioy of the holy Ghost, which neuer any can attaine vnto, but only the elect. No man can rightly praise God, vntill hee feelee in his heart that God hath chosen him vnto life and glorie: no man can attaine vnto that but hee that receiueth the spirit of adoption. Whereupon it followeth, that none but the elect can learne this song. Outwardly then hypocrites and wicked persons may learne to vtter this song in outward voyce and speech (for what words that tend to glorifie God cannot the most wicked tongue pronounce, if we respect the syllables?) but that which is in the heart, they cannot learne. Let vs then be afayd least we deceiue ourselues in this, that we can speake as good wordes to the praise of God as any, and come to the same prayers and praises that the best doe, and thinke that is al, or sufficient. For if we doe it but in word, not reioycing in heart, we neuer learned this new song, we can haue no testimonie vnto our conscience, that we be of the number of the faithfull, and pure worshippers of God. If wee labour not to learne this new song, wee faile in the whole: we are none of this companie, for they all sing as it were a new song. Lay hold of the promises then, apprehend the loue of God, and yee shall loue him againe, and then shall your greatest ioy and delight bee in praising his blessed name.

Here followeth next, that this companie which are with the Lambe vpon mount Sion, are all virgins, and not defiled with women. Here is a companie, yea a great companie of chaste and pure ones. It is meete indeede that all they which accompanie the vnspotted Lambe should be such: All virgins, all chaste and pure virgins, here is a goodly assemblie. Here the papists steppe in and lay hold for the commendation of single life, and say it appeareth hereby, that virgins alwayes accompanie Christ in heauen, and so haue greater dignitie then others haue. This maketh (as they take it) for the single life of all their Priests, Abbots, Monkes, Friers, Nunnes, and such like: for they be all vnmarried persons. If S. Iohn had said here these bee vnmarried, it had been well for their purpose: but he sayth not so, but that they are virgins, not defiled with women. For all vnmarried persons are not virgins, all that liue in single life keepe not themselves vndefiled with women. We graunt that the popish swarmes of such vermine liue a single life, but we will not graunt them to be virgins, or not defiled with women: for the earth hath been filled with the stinke of the whoredomes, incests, and abominable filthie lustes of their

their Popes, their Cardinals, their Bishops, Monkes, Friers and Nunnes. These hundreth, fourtie and foure thousand virgins which are with the Lambe, come not out of their cloysters, they must seeke for them some where els. But to answere them more fully, I say they are very much ouerseen to expound this place of single life, or as I may speake, of bodily virginity. They speake indeede reprochfully of marriage, but dare they say that the marriage bed is defiled? The holy Ghost saith, Hebr. 13. that it is vndefiled. Then when S. Iohn sayth, these are not defiled with women, if wee will vnderstand it of this corporall virginity in single life, must it not needes secretly charge all married persons to bee polluted by their marriage? When the holy Scripture plainly affirmeth that the marriage bed is not defiled, we may not expound this place to contrarie that plaine doctrine: which we must needes doe if wee will expound it of sing'e life: because in this place, virgins, and such as are not defiled with women, are put for the same thing, and as I sayd, if we take it so, then secretly it imputeth a defilement vnto all married persons. Then seeing wee may not charge the holy ordinance of God with pollution, wee must heere flye vnto another kinde of virginity, and that is a spirituall virginity: as S. Paul sayth he did labour to present the Corinthians as a chaste virgin to Christ. The Lord sheweth that hee dooth take his Church as his spouse, and she is called the Lambes wife. There is then a spirituall whoredome when men commit idolatrie, and follow the worshippe of Idols, and the superstitious inuentions of men, and doctrines of diuels. And there is a spirituall virginity where men are not defiled with such whorish women as the Idols and false worship. How often dooth the Lord vse such speeches by the Prophets, (as all that reade them can tell) that his people went a whoring when they worshipped Idols? Then thus it is: these hundreth, fourtie and foure thousand are such as kept themselves from worshipping Idols of gold, of siluer, of brasse, of stone, and of wood, which should be, and were worshipped in the kingdome of Antichrist, as it is euident by the latter ende of the ninth chapter of this prophetic. A great part of this companie also consisting of married men, and married women, were also chaste and pure as well as the rest, from the bodily fornication. Therefore beloued, if we will bee with the Lambe, imbrace and hold fast that holy and pure worship which is prescribed in the word of God, and vtterly renounce all Idolatrie and all mens deuises: for such chaste and pure virgins are meete to accompanie Christ. Such as bee polluted with fornication either carnall or spirituall, bee not as chaste virgins to bee coupled vnto Christ.

He describeth this companie yet further, and sayth, they followe the Lambe whither soeuer he goeth. The Lambe is their shepheard, they know his voyce, and goe to whatsoeuer he calleth them, and they will not heare the voyce of strangers, but doe flye from them, Iohn 10. Antichrist, euen all the false prophets in the poperie, haue sought to make the whole Church in all kingdomes obey their voyce, and they drew infinite multitudes to imbrace their doctrine, and to take their wicked decrees to bee euen as the oracles of God: but these they cannot neither by deceit, nor yet by violence draw from following the Lambe. These doe acknow-

ledge no doctrine nor no worship, but that which he hath deliuered by his holy Apostles and Prophets. Where shall we find Christ but in the scriptures, and where shall we find the true Church but with Christ? In the next words he sheweth, how it cometh that these are so nigh vnto Christ, and that indeed as he declareth is not through their owne indeuour or worthines, but that they are bought, as he saith, from men. The Lambe bought them, and he bought them with a great price, not with corruptible things, (as S. Peter sayth) as gold, or siluer, but with the pretious blood of Christ, as of a Lambe vndefiled and without spot, 1. Pet. 1. 19. He sheweth also to what end they be redeemed, in these words, being the first frutes to God and to the Lambe. By this wee must vnderstand that they be consecrated and set apart to God, and to his Christ. They are not to liue vnto themselves, they are not to serue sinne: but they are in all puritie to walke with the Lord their God. That hee saith, there was no guile found in their mouthes, and that they are without spot before the throne of God, it is not to be referred to their owne holines, but to that perfect righteousnes which they haue by faith in Christ.



The 30. Sermon.

CHAP. 14.

- 6 Then I saw an other Angell flie in the midst of heauen, hauing an everlasting Gospel to preach vnto them that dwell on the earth, and to euery nation, and kinred, tongue, and people,
- 7 Saying with a loud voice: Feare God and giue glory to him, for the houre of his iudgement is come: and worship him that made heauen and earth, the sea, and all the fountaines of water.
- 8 And there followed an other Angell, saying, it is fallen, it is fallen, Babylon that great citie, for she gaue to all nations to drinke the wine of the wrath of her fornication.
- 9 And the third Angell followed them, saying with a loud voice, if anie man worship the beast and his Image, and receiue his marke on his forehead, or on his hand,
- 10 The same shall drinke of the wine of the wrath of God, yea the pure wine which is poured into the cup of his wrath, and hee shall be punished in fire and brimstone before the holy Angels, and before the Lambe.
- 11 And the smoke of their torment shall ascend up euermore, and they shall haue

no

no rest day and night which worship the beast and his Image, and whosoever receiveth the print of his name.



He had the description in the former chapter, of the beast with seven heads that should afflict the Church, & more particularly of the seventh head which was not then risen when Iohn receiued this prophetic, which is also set forth by himselfe as a beast with two hornes like a lambe, being indeed the kingdome of the great Antichrist. In this chap. we had haue the vision which was shewed to Iohn touching the protector of the Church, and the remnant by him preserued in the dayes of that horrible darkenesse and confusion; least wee might think that the Church vterly failed in earth when that beast was worshipped in all landes, and when those were cruelly murdered that refused to worship him: And now after this he cometh to set forth the ruine and decay of this foresayd Idolatrous kingdome of great Babel. This may we hearken vnto with so much the more cheerefulness of mind, because it is not onely very comfortable in it selfe, but also that it falleth out in our dayes, and we see and behold with our eyes the fulfilling of it, being begun not yet full fourescore yeares past. The words of this text which I haue read vnto ye that doe concerne this matter, do deuide themselves into 3. parts, being the voices of three angels one following after an other. The first Angel publisheth the gospel of Christ vnto the nations of the earth. The second followeth, and proclaimeth, that great Babel (euen the bloudie kingdome of the beast) is fallen. The third Angell cryeth out with a loud voice, and denounceth the dreadfull vengeance of Almighty God against all those that doe not turne to his true worship, from that idolatrous worship of Antichrist. Here is the summe of that which I haue read vnto ye. These three Angels doe represent the ministers of Christ raised vp in these last dayes, to throw down the wicked poperie with the pure light of the gospel of Christ, which I neede not stand to prooue, because the ministers of the gospel are called the Angels of the Churches, chap. 1. It is therefore said, that the first Angel hath an everlasting gospel to preach. The true gospel is called everlasting. The popes of Rome vsurping the power of the Lord to make lawes to the conscience of men, set vp the dunghill of their owne most filthie abominations, supposing that they had established them so sure, that the holy doctrine of God deliuered by his Apostles and prophets, should neuer rise vp againe, they condemning it to be heresie, and all those to be heretikes which embrace it. But it is an everlasting gospel, they can not roote it out, nor so keepe it downe, but that it wil rise vp and flie abroad: & therefore it is said here, that the Angell that flieth in the midst of heauen, hath an everlasting gospel to preach. Let no man thinke that euer any power of man shall bee able to abolish it, seeing the whole power of the Roman beast, which all the world wondred at, could not keep it vnder. And let the Romane prelates reuile it as new doctrine, because it discloseth their wickednes, yet it is an everlasting gospel, not inuented by man, but deli-

uered by God himselfe from the beginning, and shall continue to the end. All doctrine of men shall fall, for it is not euerslasting.

And now mark how he sayth, that the Angell which preacheth this euerslasting gospel, flieth in the midst of heauen: This may seeme very strange. What doth this figure out vnto vs? It figureth out these two things, the first, that when the time was come, y^e God would cast downe the poperie, the gospel should be most swiftly caryed and spread ouer many kingdomes and nations: and then the second, that no power vnder heauen should be able to stay the course thereof. These be two great things, and here plainly figured: and now marke well how it standeth. The Romane beast had great kingdomes subiect vnto him that did worship him: this Angell must preach the gospel vnto them, therefore it is sayd he must preach it to euery nation, kinred, tongue, and people. The kingdomes are very large, & therefore here is neede of expedition to carrie and spread it ouer them. Wherefore it is not said, that the Angell standeth to preach, but that he flyeth in the midst of heauen, that is, hee caryeth it away very swiftly vnto the kingdomes and nations of the earth. Was not this fulfilled perfectly, when God raised vp first Martin Luther, and then many other worthie instruments which caryed the gospel into many kingdomes, and spread it farre and wide? How swiftly hath it runne ouer large kingdomes since that time? I neede not stand to name the countries vnto yee into which it is spread.

Then to the second point, This Angell flyeth with it in the midst of heauen: which figureth out vnto vs, that it is beyonde the power and reach of the beast, and beyonde the reach of the Kings that stand for the kingdome of the beast, to stop the course of it. Kings and Emperours haue had great power, and the Popes haue had greater then they all: but let all the Emperours, Kings, and Popes, ioyne their whole forces together, and see if they can stop a cloud when it flieth aboue in the ayre. If they cannot, then how will they stop this Angell that flyeth in the midst of heauen with the gospel, and publisheth it to the nations? The Ministers of the Gospel whome the Lorde raised vp, as Luther, Melancthon, Bucer, Peter Martir, Caluine, Virete, and many others, walked vpon the earth, and published and spread the truth through the nations: and yet they were so far aboue the reach of the beast from laying hold of their persons to kill them, or to stop the course of their preaching, that they are figured out here to flie with it in the midst of heauen. Such as haue not obserued this are very senselesse and dull. Thus we see how speedily the gospel should bee caryed ouer the kingdomes of the worlde, when great Babell should downe, and how no power vpon earth should be able to stop it, the Angel flying with it in the midst of heauen. Now let vs heare the doctrine it selfe which he preacheth, for the summe of it is here reported, which is this, saying with a loud voice, Feare God, & giue glory to him, for the hower of his iudgement is come: and worship him that made heauen and earth, the sea, and all the fountaines of water. What a wonderfull comforte and confirmation vnto vs here is giue, to stand in the doctrine now published against the Romish Antichrist, seeing the gospel which this Angell flyeth withall, containeth the whole summe of all

all the doctrine which M. Luther, M. Caluin, and the rest haue taught out of Gods word, no difference at all to be found? For read ouer all their bookes which they haue written and published, and see if this be not the summe of all their doctrine which they preached, namely, that men should turne from feare, glorifying, and worshipping creatures, to feare, to glorifie, and to worship God alone, which hath made all things. The papistrie worshippeth and glorifieth euen with diuine honour, men and Angels, yea Idols of gold, of siluer, of brasse, of stone, and wood, with the reliques and rotten bones of dead men. This Angell (euen those holy ministers whome God raised vp in these last dayes to deliuer his Church from the tyrannie of Antichrist) publish with a loud voice, that the true and liuing God which made the heauens, the earth, the sea, and all the riuers and fountaines of waters, is alone to be feared, glorified, and worshipped with diuine honour. This Angel cryeth out with so mightie a crie, that all the nations do heare the same, & are brought to see that it is wicked and blasphemous sacriledge against the glorious Sonne of God, to seeke remission of sinnes in the merites of men, and in the blood of Martyrs, and to pray to Saints or Angels, seeing there is one mediator betweene God and man, the man Iesus Christ, who alone hath made the reconciliation by his crosse. This Angel hath now almost these fourescore yeares sounded forth ouer many great kingdomes, that it is horrible idolatrie and euen the worship of deuils, to bow and pray to Images, which are nothing but vanitie and lies. Finally, this Angell hath proclaimed, and proclaimeth still at this day prouing by the holy written word, that all the inuentions of poperie are nothing else but horrible prophanations of the worship of God, and therefore that men are to turne from them, and to feare, to glorifie and to worship the true God alone, with that pure worship which hee hath prescribed in his writte word. Let men examine euery syllable of that which S. Iohn reporteth here to be the voice of the Angell that flyeth in the midst of heauen with an euerslasting gospel to preach to all nations, and see if it be not in euery respect the same that hath been and is now preached by the Ministers of the gospel. And then considering that the poperie is flat contrary, ascribing to creatures the things which are peculiar to God, and to his sonne Iesus Christ, why should not we take courage to stand against them, reioycing in that holy doctrine which the Lord hath here vttered in vision so long since? And now let vs see what effect the voice of this Angell hath. Is this euerslasting gospel which chalengeth all honour, glory, and worship to God alone, published in vaine to the nations of the world, against the kingdome of the beast? No verily: It throweth it downe. For marke what he sayth: And there followed an other Angell, saying, it is fallen, it is fallen, Babylon that great citie, for she gaue to all nations to drinke the wine of the wrath of her fornication. So soone as euer the gospel brake forth and was published among the nations, calling vpon men to turne from the worship of creatures, to worship the true God, downe falleth the kingdome of Antichrist, the kingdome of confusion great Babel, which oppressed the church, that Romish tyranny of popes, which consisteth altogether of Idolatrie, superstition, and worship of deuils. The

light hath disclosed them, and men haue turned from those abominations. The Pope suppressing the holy word of God, and so bringing in thicke darknes vpon the nations in which hee had couered them, set vp himselfe euen in the place of God, and did what he lust in the darke, all his decrees being holden as the oracles of God, and he was worshipped as one that could both saue and destroy. Now at the voyce of this Angell, there is such light, that great kings and princes and rulers, with great multitudes of their subiects, had their eyes opened to behold that the Romish religion is idolatrous, that the Papacie is the very kingdome of the great Antichrist: and so whereas before, they worshipped the beast, now they holde vp their hands onely to the God of heauen, and glorifie him in his sonne Iesus Christ. Now were lawes made in kingdomes and prouinces to abolish that vsurped power of the Bishop of Rome. Now were lawes and iniunctions set forth, to destroy, roote out and deface al monuments of his idolatrous and superstitious worship, which he had erected in all kingdomes. Now the Popes which were honoured euen as Gods vpon the earth, while men sought remission of sinnes at their hands, and the blessing of eternall life, as if they could bestow it at their pleasure, are so farre from this honour and glory, that they bee iudged the most vile and abominable that liue. Is not Babell then fallen? where is their glorie, where is their dignitie and estimation, yea where is all their terrible power which they exercised in times past? If any will object that the dominion of Rome is not quite downe. That is nothing: for it is not meant that the fall of Babell, and her vtter abolishing should bee all at once, but her ruine shall be by degrees. It is a thing determined with God, and pronounced, that she shall downe: and therefore the Angell for to declare the certaintie thereof, doubleth the speech, saying, it is fallen, it is fallen, Babylon that great citie. Who is there in the worlde, which is not almost a blocke, which seeth not that the Romish power and tyrannie is cast downe by the voyce of the Angell, that is, by the doctrine of the Gospel now preached?

Behold here the power of Gods trueth in throwing downe Babell. Who could haue thought, liuing an hundreth yeares past, and beholding the power and glory of that Romane tyrannie, that such a Monarchie shuld so suddenly be cast down, neuer to be recouered againe? But as the Angell sayth, the time of his iudgement is come, and in very decde strong is hee that iudgeth her. Nay, this is more then wonderfull, that whereas all the power of kings could not pull it downe (the kings fearing the Popes curse) the voyce of doctrine vttered by a few men of no worldly power hath done it. Yea I may say further, that there is no power of kings now able to hold it vp. For as it was beyond the power of kings to pul it downe, so is it farre from them now to bee able to hold it vp. The beast hath bestirred him, and sent into all lands for to stirre vp the Princes to put to death all that will not worship him. And diuers mightie kings and princes haue so farre giuen their power to the beast, that they entred into a league (which they call the holy League) and vowed to ioyne together to roote out from the earth al that imbrace that gospel here vttered by the Angell, and will not imbrace the Romish religion, & worship the beast. But what haue they preuailed, seeing the Gospel hath spread fur-

ther

ther and further? Many make doubt whether the poperie bee that kingdome of the great Antichrist which should come. They cannot see it to be a matter of full certaintie, wherein we may rest out of all doubt and controuersie. Let them consider well of this place, what the euerlasting Gospel is which the Angell preacheth to all nations, kindreds, tongues and people. Let them also consider that the second Angell after the publishing of that doctrine, proclaimeth the fall of Babylon that great citie. Then further let them see whether it be not the same doctrine now of late preached among nations, which the Angell here vttereth. And finally, marke whether the poperie bee not cast downe by it. Finding these things thus to concurre, why should wee doubt, but that the papisme is the very beast with two hornes like a Lambe, euen the great Antichrist? And now brethren, how happie are we, and how great thanks and praise are wee with glad mindes to offer vp to God almightie, that we are borne and liue in the dayes in which the Angell flyeth with this heauenly Gospel, and see the ruines of that idolatrous kingdome, which hath murdered so many true worshippers of God, and seduced so many thousand thousands, vnto the worship of diuels? Yea howfoeuer they raile vpon them, happie and thirsc happie are those great seruants of God, Luther, Caluin, Bucer, Martir, Bullinger, Cranmer, Ridley, and others, which haue succeeded and followed since their dayes, and are indeede the Angell that flyeth in the middest of heauen, to call men with the pure doctrine of the Gospel, from worshipping the beast and dumbe Idols, to worship the true and liuing God. Let vs also for our part step in, and with all our might so farre as the Lord doth inable vs, and call vs, strike at the head of this monster, and increase the ruines of wicked Babell. We all see how the seruants of Antichrist bestirre them, and especially those wicked traytors the Iesuities, to heale the wounds that are giuen to their Idoll, and to recouer the breaches, which are made in the walles of their great citie: and shall not we be as forward in the seruice of the Lord? Is there any thing here wherein we may so much reioyce, as in the ruine and downfall of Babylon, being so horribly wicked? For see what the Angell addeth as the cause why the Lord God will execute sharpe vengeance vpon her: for she gaue (sayth he) to all nations to drinke of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. Here bee but few words, but yet they expresse a sea, or gulf of most wicked abominations committed by Babel, the Romish synagogue. For marke well euery part of the sentence: Her filthines is not compassed in with narrow bounds, as committed in some one kingdome: but spreadeth it selfe ouer all nations: for he sayth, she gaue to all nations to drinke of the wine, &c. It is a foule thing before God to corrupt one man: it is more to corrupt a familie, and so goe vp by degrees to a whole citie and to a kingdome, which is very much: and if it stayed there, yet how horrible must it needes bee in the sight of God? But Rome hath not stayed there, but hath corrupted and seduced all nations vnto Idolatrie, superstition, heresies, and worship of false Gods: who is able then to declare the largenes of the sea or gulf of all her abominations? What madnes is it in the papists to boast of their multitudes? seeing it is plainly expressed, that the great Antichrist, the whore of Babylon shall giue to all nations to

drinke of her cup. And this is the cause why the holy Ghost calleth Antichrist the man of sinne. Ieroboam made Israell to sinne when he set vp the golden calves to be worshipped, and so might bee called a man of sinne: but what was his fault being in a little corner among the tenne tribes, if it bee compared to that which the Popes of Rome haue done in all nations? There is the man of sinne indeede. Neuer was there any kingdome vnder heauen, that corrupted and seduced so many nations vnto wicked idolatries, as the kingdome, or beast with two hornes. Thus much touching the large spreading of Babels abominations: now marke with what speech he expresseth her sinne. He calleth it the wine of wrath of her fornication. Because the Lord vseth this metaphor that Babel offeth the nations a cup to drinke of, he also continuing the metaphor, calleth all her abominations wine, which she putteth into the same for them to drinke. And then further that we may vnderstand what wine it is that she hath caused them to drinke out of her cup, he calleth it the wine of her fornication. Although the Popes haue set vp or allowed stewes, and filled the earth with such kind of whoredomes, yet this is not so much to bee taken for that, as for that spirituall whoredome, that idolatrie, superstition, and all filthie inuentions, by which they corrupted the holy ordinances of God, and set vp a false religion. This is their chiefe whoredome, wherein they haue drawne infinite thousands of thousands from God, to commit fornication with stockes and stones. And then last of all, it is not only the wine of her fornication, but the wine of the wrath of her fornication. This sheweth that the Lord is prouoked to wrath and displeasure, and so to execute vengeance for her abominations. This wine of wrath may be taken both these waies: first, that the Lord being moued to wrath with the world for despising his trueth, gaue scope to Satan to erect the kingdome of Antichrist, and so to bring in all abominable idolatrie. For that S. Paul teacheth, 2. Thess. 2. Then secondly, that it prouoketh the Lord God to wrath, who is a ielous God, and will not suffer his glorie to be giuen to creatures, yea Idols, and to diuels, but he will bee reuenged. Then wee see that the spirituall whoredome of the Church of Rome, is the wine of wrath. So lay al these together, Babylon that great citie hath spread her filthines so farre and wide, that she hath corrupted all nations, making them to drinke of her cup, so that there is a deepe gulf of her abominations. She hath filled her cup with all filthie fornication, vnto which she hath led both the kings and their subiects, who haue greedily supped vp the same euen to the dregges. It is the wine of wrath, for the iust God is prouoked thereby: therefore Babylon is fallen, it is fallen. It is not possible that this proude kingdome should stand, the most high God comming to iudgement agaynst her, euen to powre forth his wrath and vengeance. Here is a generall doctrine for vs all to meditate often vpon. And that is, if the mightie kingdom of the world come downe for wickednesse, who can escape that prouoketh him? For if hee iudge the nations, how shall any one man escape? And when ye see wicked men flourish, and be so mightie in the world that yee thinke they must needs stand, remember how great Babel which made all kings to tremble at her power, is fallen for her wickednesse. So will the Lord God of heauen cast downe al the workers of iniquitie.

quitie. Now we come to the voyce of the third Angell, who denounceth iudgement and vengeance vnto all those which will not turne from worshipping the beast, to worship the true God. And first it is to bee noted, that this Angell is also sayd to vtter his message with a loude voyce, which is to shew the vehemencie thereof, which the slow, the deaffe, and duleares of many causeth. For albeit the light of the Gospell hath turned so great multitudes from poperie, that Babel hath caught a very great fall, yet experience doth teach vs, that many hauing been nuzled vp in poperie stand vpon the antiquitie of it, and condemne the holy Gospell of Christ as new learning: Therefore least such should flatter themselves, and least the weake should be seduced by the, it is very necessary that the wrath and vengeance of God should be strongly denounced against them. Thinke not therefore that it is an intemperate heate (or as some smooth Atheists terme it rayling) when the true seruants of Christ that publish the Gospell, doe with great vehemencie denounce vengeance against the popish idolaters: seeing the Lord hath here figured it long before by an Angell. Nay rather know that this Angell figureth the true ministers of the Gospell, and therefore they execute not their office faithfully, which do it not. There be many also which account so little which religion be set forth, that they think they worship God in both. They cannot see, but that the papists also bee good Christians, and worship God: the voyce of this Angell is very needfull for them, that they may see what dreadfull vengeance the Lord denounceth against the popish worshippers. Well, let vs come to the words which this Angell proclaimeth with so loude a voyce. They may all be deuided into two two parts, whereof the one noteth out with supposition the worshippers of the beast: the other describeth the wofull torments which they shall endure for the same. The former is thus, if any man worship the beast and his image, and receiue his marke on his forehead or on his hand: That is to say, if any man professe and take the Church of Rome, euen that idolatrous strumpet, which vsurpeth power ouer Gods worde, to bee the true Church, euen the chaste and beloued spouse of Christ: If any man acknowledge the Pope to bee the Vicar of Christ, the head of the Church, and that hee hath power and authoritie to make lawes to binde the faith and conscience, which men are to obey vnder paine of damnation, and so receiue all his decrees as the oracles of God: If any hold, that there is no remission of finnes but in that societie and vnder that head, and so will haue his pardon from him, or from some that haue that power from him, beleeuing that the Pope hath that power committed to him to pardon whole finnes he will, & that the same power is deriued from him as from the head and fountaine vnto all his shauelings: If any man hold these foresayd things, or carrie an open profession or marke to shew that he holdeth them, & ioyneth in the Idol seruice with that synagogue, or wisheth to ioyne being restrained, the same worshippeth the beast and his image, and carrieth indeede his marke. That same is hee to whom or against whom the Angell denounceth this sharpe vengeance.

One part of the wordes which denounce the horrible damnation vnto the popish worshippers, set forth the vengeance of God by two comparisuns, namely, of wine

wine poured into a cuppe and giuen them to drinke, and of fire and brimstone in which they shal burne: the other declareth that their torment shall neuer haue any end, nor any intermission. When God by his Prophets of old, did threaten destruction to the wicked nations, hee sometime vsed this figuratiue speech, that they should take the cup and drinke: So here, like as the Idolaters haue willingly receiued the cup at the hands of the whore of Babylon, to drinke vp her filthy abominations, the Angell threatneth that they shall be made to drinke of an other cup, that is, of the cup of Gods wrath. And hee calleth it the wine of Gods wrath which is poured into this cup. Wine is a piercing thing when it is receiued into a mans bodie: And so by this similitude is meant, that the worshippers of Antichrist shall as it were euen drinke and bee filled both in soule and body, euen as vessels, with the piercing wine of the wrath of God. There shall bee no part of them free from it. And the Angell doth amplifie the matter, that he sayth, it shall bee vnmixed wine, which is not delayed, and therefore so much the more piercing and searhing. O wofull creatures that drinke in this wine, it will leaue no corner free in them, in all parts both of body and soule.

The other comparison, which is of fire and brimstone, declareth in most fearefull manner the bitter torments of the wrath of God. What torment is like vnto fire and brimstone? who is able to abide it euen for one day? If a man should lye a whole yeare in such torment, were it not a wonderfull horror? And the Angell saith here, that they shall bee tormented in fire and brimstone before the holy Angels, and before the Lambe. They shall be a gazing stocke in their torments vnto the Angels and Saints, who shall not pitie them, but reioyce to see their confusion. And moreover, they shall not lye in these torments for a yeare, or for yeares, but for euer, as the Angell sheweth. The smoake (saith he) of their torments ascendeth vp for euermore. We know that if smoake ascend vp, the fire is not quenched: therefore it declareth that this fire shall neuer bee quenched. Yea further, it is shewed, that it shall not bee with them, as it is with men that suffer grievous torments here in their bodies which come by fittes, with some intermission, and sometimes they haue things that refresh and comforte, and sometimes they sleepe and forget, or feele not their paine: but the euermore torment of these, as it were in fire and brimstone, shall neuer bee eased one minute of an hower, neither by day nor by night. This is the portion of those that worship the beast and his image, and receiue the print of his name. Here is the good which the Pope doth bring vpon all that loue and honour him. O consider it I beseech yee: and embrace the pure and holic worship of God which he hath prescribed in his word. Cleaue fast vnto it, and bee not drawen by any tormentes to drinke of that whores cuppe: least yee drinke of the cup of Gods wrath. It is much better to giue your bodies to bee burned for the Lords truth, then to be tormented world without end in fire and brimstone.

The



The 31. Sermon.

CHAP. 13.

- 12 *Here is the patience of the Saints, here are they which keepe the commandments of God, and the faith of Iesus.*
 13 *And I heard a voice from heauen, saying vnto me, write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth, yea saith the spirit, because they rest from their labours, and their works follow them.*



I haue seene before in this chapter, what terrible wrath and vengeance is denounced by the voice of the third Angell, against the worshippers of the beast: and now we shall see on the contrary part, how wel it shall be with those which renouncing all idolatrie and superstition, sticke fast to the truth. The other are not so vnhappie, but these shall be as happie. But because either of these, that is to say, the happines of the one, and the vnhappines of the other, is remoued farre from sense: here is a sentence interlaced, to stirre vp and to prepare the minds of the godly vnto a deepe consideration. For he saith, here is the patience of the Saints, here are they which keepe the commandments of God, and haue the faith of Iesus. It is sayd that all the popish worshippers of Idols shall bee cast into hell, and tormented with eternall flames, because they forsake the true God, and follow the lawes of the beast: in the meane time they glory that the heauens are theirs, that their Pope can bring them thither: they insult ouer the godly, they reuile them as heretikes, they persecute and treade them downe. Here then is need of patience, here the holy seruants of God are tryed.

Then on the other part, what precious promises are made vnto all those that shall faithfully and constantly embrace the pure worship of the Lord? But what appearance is there now of any such thing? They be afflicted and tormented here in the world, so that of all men they seeme to bee the most miserable. Here therefore their obedience to the lawes of God, and their faith is tryed: here may wee learne a good lesson, when we see the wicked enemies of Gods truth flourish in the world, and oppresse the poore seruants of Christ. If we can looke vp vnto the high providence of God, who gouernaeth and disposeth all by his heauenly wisdom: If we can with patience waite his time, we shall euen in the greatest assaults that can come, rest assured of this, that God wil pul downe al proud tyrants which oppresse his seruants, and which corrupt at their pleasure his holy worship. And that he wil
 poure

pour forth his vengeance vpon them. And further, we shall nothing doubt howeuer the faithfull bee afflicted in this world, but that they shall be raised vp vnto glory: Their state shall be exceeding good. While men iudge by outward appearance, and by their owne wisdom, and carnall sense in these things, they be caryed cleane awry, and chuse to cleaue to the stronger part. O let vs learne indeede, that we must haue our patience tried, our obedience also and faith, to see how we will sticke to the truth. Many do stumble when they see the proud corrupters, euen like giants as it were raigne ouer the godly, and presse them downe at their pleasure, boasting of their wisdom, of their knowledge, of their faith and hope, as if they were the very maine pillars of all truth vpon the earth, reuiling as base dounge or dross, such as vnfaignedly studie in all singlenes of heart to please God, and that cleaue wholly to his word: but if they could beholde what is threatened to the one, and what is promised to the other, it would stay and vphold them very much. We ought to fasten our eyes vpon it, that it may stay vs in patience.

As wee haue therefore seene the torments of Idolaters laid open, so let vs come now to the sentence vttered, which declareth the state of the godly after this life: For we haue heard the vengeance denounced against the worshippers of the beast, and the preparing of the minds of the faithfull. I heard (sayth he) a voice from heauen, saying vnto me, write, the dead are blessed from henceforth that die in the Lord, euen so saith the spirite, because they rest from their labours, and their workes doe follow them. This is a most noble sentence, and worthy not onely to bee grauen in letters of gold, but also euen in the tables of the heart, and I beseech ye write it vp there. And we are to note first for exposition, that the chiefe or whole pith of matter of this sentence is set downe in fewe wordes in the middest thereof, and the matters of circumstance to commend the same, goe partly before, and partly follow it. For the whole matter is in these wordes, The dead are blessed that dye in the Lord from henceforth. The matters of circumstance which goe before it to set forth the worthines and authoritie thereof, are in these wordes, I heard a voice from heauen, saying vnto me, write. And that which followeth sheweth reasons why those dead are blessed in these wordes, The spirite sayth so, because they rest from their labours, and their workes follow them. I will deale with the words in that order in which they lie. Saint Iohn heard a voice from heauen, which sheweth the truth and excellencie of it, because it cometh from God. That which is from the earth, or from man, is of no dignitie, of no authoritie or credite, because there is nothing in man by nature but spirituall darkenes, error, falshood, and vntruth. There is nothing but that which is polluted, vncleane, and abominable, which Satan the prince of darknes, hath brought in. Contrariwise, in heauen all is pure, and cleere, and free from error, all is excellent and full of dignitie, and this voice cometh from heauen. This voice cometh from the throne of God, that we may giue credite vnto it, as vnto an infallible oracle. It is most requisite that this saying, the dead are blessed which die in the Lorde from henceforth, should bee confirmed in this manner, it is so farre remoued from all sense and reason of man. For the faithfull haue from time to time beene reproched, reuiled, dishonored among men, and
many

many of them cruelly murdered, and haue left no shew behind them in the worlde why they shuld be in better case then others. The world reioyceth and triumpheth against them, as if their end were meere follie and madnes. Well, a voice from heauen is to be opposed against all voices of men whatsoeuer, and wee may safely rest in it. Although we doe not see how blessed the dead are which die in the Lord, yet wee may stedfastly beleue it, because this voice cometh from heauen which affirmeth it.

Then it followeth, Saying vnto me, write. Saint Iohn sheweth, that hee did not onely heare the voice pronouncing such a matter, but also before it is pronounced, he is willed to write it. Write (saith the voice) the dead are blessed which dye in the Lord from henceforth. He had a commandement in the first chapter to write in a booke the things which he had seene, and being now againe commanded to write this saying, that it might stand in record vnto all posterities, it is to teach vs that it is a saying right excellent and necessarie for all the seruants of God, euen to confirme them against all troubles, daungers, reproches, infamies, and against the terror of death it selfe. The most high God himselfe from heauen, hath willed his seruant Iohn to write, that the dead are blessed which dye in the Lorde. But see how the speech is framed, it is not saide indefinitely, generally, or absolutely without restraint, that the dead are blessed, but those that dye in the Lord: For there is a difference of the dead. Such as dye in their sinnes, death doth not dispatch or rid them from their miseries, but is as the gate through which they passe into the gulfe of endlesse woe. They passe from the lesse miseries (which they haue endured in this life) vnto the greater. Such as dye in the Lord, that is, all such as are found in Christ, death is as the gate through which they passe from all the calamities which light vpon them in this vale of miseries, vnto endlesse ioy and blisse. For Christ hath ouercome sin, the deuil, and death it selfe: He hath led them captiue and triumphed ouer the in his crosse. All such as are found in him, haue all their sinnes abolished, his innocencie is put vpon the, they are reconciled vnto God, how shall any euill then come nigh vnto the? Behold what a goodly thing it is to die in y Lord: It is the fulnes of blisse. And they that liue in the Lord, as ye must obserue, are they that shall dye in the Lord. I doe not deny, but that some which spent their life wickedly haue dyed in the Lord, as the theefe for one, which did hang at the right hand of Christ. But this is a rare gift of God, they be more then mad fooles which presume vpon it. He that will be wise, let him bend all his studie and care, euen in the whole course of his life to apprehend the faith and liuely power of Christ, euen to liue in him, that he may dye in him. Yea let all the whole life bee no more but to learne to dye well and blessedly. For if a man lay hold of the holy faith, and studie to please God with a pure conscience, if he seeke the mortification of the old man with all his corrupt lustes, and fulfill not the desires of the flesh: If he put on the new man, and walke in the vertues of the spirite, the vertue and power of the death and resurrection of Christ is in him, he doth liue in the Lord, whē death approacheth he shal haue peace of conscience, he shall reioyce that he shall also die in the Lord. There is no goodlier matter for vs to endeauour then this same. And marke well how he saith from
henceforth

hence-forth, which is as much as to say, presently, or forth-with. They that dye in the Lord are blessed by entering into ioy presently, there is no delay. Their soules wander not vp and downe, that it neede to be sayd, God rest their soules, God rest their soules, as the superstitious papists vse to say. They are not boyling in purgatorie, and so neede prayers, almes, Dirges, Masses, and the Popes pardons to helpe them out, nor any other popish filthie trash. Yee see that the voyce of God from heauen pronounceth, and willeth Iohn to write it, that the dead which dye in the Lord are not onely blessed, but also from hence-forth, that is to say, euen so soone as euer they bee departed out of this life, because they enter presently into rest, and are freed from all their calamities, labours, and afflictions, which they endured while they walked vpon the earth. What then, shal we beleue this voyce of God, which S. Iohn is willed to set downe in writing, or shall wee beleue the popish Church which affirme, teach, and stilly maintaine the flat contrary? Which (think you) deserueth to be credited, the voyce of God from heauen, which telleth vs that they are presently in blisse and rest from their labours which dye in the Lord? or shall we beleue the Pope and his shauelings, which for their gaine, do teach that many which dye in the true faith, and so in the Lord, goe into the grievous paines of purgatorie, and must haue their helpe by Masses and pardons to come out? There bee three places (say they) vnto which the soules of men doe goe when they depart this life, Heauen, Hell, and Purgatorie. They which dye in a perfect good estate, goe immediatly to heauen: they that on the contrary are found in a state so wicked that they bee not at all in the state of grace, goe directly to Hell: and such as bee in a middle estate betweene these, not perfect, but hauing some drosse of their sinnes, and yet not out of the state of grace, these before they can goe to heauen, are cast into that purging fire, and tarrie there longer or shorter time as the matter of their sinne is, or as they receiue helpe from the liuing. This is the popish doctrine. And when wee say it is wicked, and that it dooth derogate from the blood of Christ, which onely doth purge the soule of man from sinne: when we say it is blasphemous that the Pope dooth challenge such power, as to fetch out soules out of purgatorie by his pardons, which he selleth for money: and when we truly affirme that there is no such purgatorie taught in Gods word, but that it is mans inuention, alleadging this place against it, that the dead are forth-with blessed which dye in the Lord, because they be at rest: the Iesuites reply, that this place maketh nothing against purgatorie, and certaine vaine shifts they haue deuised to auoyd it. As first they would haue these words in the Lord, to be taken for the Lord, or for the Lords cause, and so they say it is to bee vnderstood onely of the Martyrs which were slaine for witnessing the Gospell, whom their Church denyeth to goe to purgatorie, but directly to heauen without delay. So they will haue it thus, the dead are blessed that die in the Lord, that is the Martyrs, they goe forth-with to heauen, as this text teacheth; but yet others (say they) goe to purgatorie. Let it be that in the Lord may be taken to be, for the Lord: yet what reason can be shewed why such restraint should bee made in this place? Are not al that dye in Christ, true members of his mysticall bodie? Are not his members coupled vnto him

him as to their head by a spirituall vnion? Then doth not S. Paul say, that hee was made sinne for vs, which knew no sinne, that we in him might bee made the righteousness of God? 2. Cor. 5. What is this, but that the things which are in the body are imputed to the head: and that contrariwise the things which are in the head are imputed to the bodie? seeing the head, and the body stand as one ioyned together. All the redeemed are the body, and Christ the head, they be in him, and he in them. That which is theirs, is imputed vnto their head Christ: as namely their sinne, their curse, their penaltie, their death, all which he bare vpon the crosse, that he might abolish them. That which is his, is imputed vnto his body, euen his obedience, his puritie, and all good things that be in him. He hath abolished their vnrightheousnes, their curse, and their death: and hath put vpon them his righteousness, his blessing, and his life. If these things be thus, (as those words of S. Paul doe plainly shew) how should any that dyeth a true member of Christ, whether he die as a martyr, or otherwise, bee sent any where else to bee purged, but onely in the blood of Christ? Haue not all true beleeuers their pardon through Christ, and dye in him, as well as the martyrs? If Christ were made sinne for all the members of his mysticall bodie which is the Church, and if euery true member of the Church, bee made the righteousness of God in him: then how shall not all that dye in him forth-with be blessed? Hath not the death of Christ sufficiency in it self fully to abolish sinne, but his very true members which be in him and he in them, must be cast into a fire to purge them? Nay, they are from hence-foorth blessed that die in him. Our Iesuites reply yet further, that although these words, the dead are from hence-foorth blessed that dye in the Lord, be taken generally for all that dye in the state of grace, yet it proueth nothing against purgatorie. How so? Forsooth they shew reasons to proue, that such as bee in purgatorie, bee in a more blessed estate then the godly which liue vpon the earth, which yet are called blessed euen while they liue. First, because the words of the text here be plaine, that such as dye in the Lord doe rest from their labours, they affirme that the soules in purgatorie may bee sayd to rest in peace. Is it not strange that purgatorie must become a place of such happie rest? But let vs heare what reasons they bring. The soules in purgatorie (say they) are set free from the labours, afflictions, and persecutions of this life. See how contrary the popish seducers are vnto themselves. For when they would make their greatest gaine of purgatorie, they terrifie the rich men by describing the horrible and vspeakeable torments thereof, that they may bee readie to buy their pardons and their Masses with any exceeding great price, rather then to lye there one day. The fire of purgatorie (say they) differeth not in sharpnes, or bitterness of torment, from the fire of hell, but onely that it lasteth not but for a time, the soule commeth out of it, but they that bee in hell neuer come out. And then further they say, that the fire of hell exceedeth in heate our common fire which wee haue here, as much as our fire exceedeth painted fire. Painted fire doth burne but a little, and we al know that our fire doth burne with great smart, and if the smart of the fire of purgatorie bee as farre beyond that, as that is beyond the smart of painted fire, I thinke they haue small rest which be in purgatorie. When the Pope would

would fill his coffers, then purgatorie fire burneth with vnspokeable torments: but when the holy Ghost pronounceth, that the dead which dye in the Lord are forth-with blessed, because they rest from their labours, then rather then there shall be no purgatorie, purgatorie shall be a place of happie rest in comparison of the afflictions of this life. Sure if this doctrine of the Iesuites stand, the Pope were euen almost as good to haue no purgatorie at all. They say, there goe no Martyrs into purgatorie, such then as goe thither, goe but out of the ordinary afflictions of this life, and the state there (they say) is better then the state here: then the rich men, if it be so, will not giue their monny and their lands very fast to get out so speedily from thence, but euen arme themselves to beare it: for they bee very loath to goe from hence, and if their estate here bee lesse blessed then there, what should they make such haste to get out from thence? Yea, say the Papists, for there they are out of the danger of sinning. What then? if they lye boyling in torments vnspokeable for their former offences, doe they rest from their labours? Can it bee sayd that they be blessed because they be at rest? Yea (say they) although the torments bee great, yet because none goe into that purging fire but such as goe to heauen, they are sure of their saluation, they know they shall goe to heauen after a time, which they could not for certaintie know while they liued here, and so they rest and are blessed. Then it seemeth, that the soule may at the same time feele, both vnspokeable torment, and vnspokeable ioy: which is absurd. The whole man consisting of bodie and soule, the body being in paine, the minde may reioyce: but how both those should be in the minde at once let them shew. Well yet further, because they perceiue that these their friuolous cauils cannot auoyd the force of this place, they proceede and say, the word from hence-foorth, doth not signifie from this present time forward, as if the Apostle had sayd, that after their death and so forward they are happie: but noteth the time past of the fathers vnder the law, with the time of the Gospell, in this sense, that in the time of the lawe, the fathers that dyed in the state of grace went into *Limbus Patrum*: but now, except the impediment bee in themselves, such as dye in the state of grace goe straight to heauen, and so are blessed in comparison of them that went into that *Limbus*. It is a strange thing to heare men reason vpon their owne inuentions: for this *Limbus Patrum* is euen as hard to proue, as the purgatorie, I meane as the papists doe teach of it: for they make it to bee as it were the brimme of hell, and therefore they say Christ descended into hell, to fetch out the fathers. Christ sayth, that the soule of Lazarus was carried by the Angels into Abrahams bosome where it was comforted: by which it is euident that the soules of the godly were in blessed rest before the coming of our Sauour Christ. To say therefore that the dead that now dye in the Lord are blessed because they goe straight to heauen, and not to *Limbus*, is a rotten cauill, and not worthie any answer. Well, thus this place which pronounceth that the dead which dye in the Lord, doe rest from their labours and are blessed, quite ouerthroweth the popish purgatorie. God hath pronounced it from heauen, the Iesuites haue beat their braines to inuent cauils and shifts to defend their inuented purgatorie from the dint of it, but cannot.

Therefore

Therefore beloved, lay hold of Christ to liue and die in him, and bee assured that so as soone as euer ye depart this life, your soules shall be carryed into rest and ioy. Beleeue not that feareful purgatorie which is blasphemous against the blood of Christ, and is maintained by the popes of Rome to get plentie of money for their Masses and pardons.

It followeth, The spirite sayth so. This is added for confirmation, because we are so hard of beleeve. The holy Ghost is the spirite of truth, and he affirmeth from heauen, that the dead which die in the Lord, are blessed from henceforth: shall wee not beleeue him? Shall wee doubt of his word? Although they seeme to make an ende of their life here without all honour, yea euen to perish, the worlde doth so insult ouer them, yet doubt not but that they are blessed, because the spirite sayth so. He sayth so, then ground vpon it. His credite is more then the credite of the Pope and all his shauclings: beleeue them not, for they speake by the spirite of Antichrist. And although we ought to giue credit to the voice of God vttered barely without reasons to confirme the same, yet he staieth not there, that is in bare affirming, but yeelding to our weaknes, addeth confirmations. For he sayth, they rest from their labours, and their workes doe follow them. Their happines is here set forth in two partes, to shew indeed that it is a true blessednes. The one is, that they rest from their labours: the other is, that their workes doe follow them. As touching the former, it is a great part of happines to be deliuered and set free from calamities, from sorrowes, from labours, and from the troubles of this life, especially in the godly, who as Saint Paul sayth, are of all other the most miserable in this life, 1. Cor. 15. for they are subiect to the common calamities, as of sicknes, povertie, losses, and painefull labours, and besides those, the world doth hate them, reuile and persecute them, and that so bitterly, that many of them haue beene imprisoned, racked, tormented, and cruelly put to death by the Romish beast. It is, as I said, a great part of happines to rest from all these labours: but it is not a perfect happines, vnlesse we will say that the horse which hath beene sore trauailed, is happy when he is dead, because he resteth from his labours. The dumbe beast being dead feeleth neither good nor euill, but in that respect is well that hee resteth from his miseries which his cruell master put him vnto: And least any might imagine that the dead in Christ had none other blessednes but that, euen to rest from their labours, here is added the other part, namely, that their workes follow them. This maketh vp the true blessednes, this sheweth that they do not rest from their labours as feeling neither good nor euill, but that they be in ioy. For God hath promised, that he will honour them that honour him. He hath promised that he will reward with glory euery good worke of his seruants: and here it is said, that their workes do follow them: their good deeds which they did in loue of God, and of his truth, are not forgotten, but doe accompany them. Death seemeth to cutt off all from them, and quite to strip them, as indeed he cutteth off honours, riches, wiues, children, and friends: but he cannot cut off, nor separate them from their good workes. Indeed it is most certaine that a man goeth naked and bereft of all thinges that hee enioyeth in this life, sauing his workes, for they doe still accompanie him, as we are

V

here

here taught. It is a thing worthie great consideration. Men giue their mindes to seeke for such things as they thinke shall doe them good: as for humane wisdom, for riches, for honours, for dignities, for delights, and for friendes. And some vse there is indeede of these things here in the world: but they doe not well consider that death shall cut them off from all these thinges, and leaue them vtterly naked. They doe not wisely way what it is to haue great troupes and traines attend vpon them for a time of such as death will shut the doore vpon, and thrust backe from following of their masters. They doe not wisely provide such a traine as death can not keepe backe, but that they shall accompany and followe them: For there is such a traine, and who are they? euen their workes. For so it is here said, and their workes shall follow them. O that we could well consider what a blessing this is: how would wee then while we liue here, provide to haue such a traine to accompanie vs at our death as cannot be kept backe, when all other things shall leaue vs alone, and vtterly forsake vs. We see the great men of this world what great troupes they haue follow them of household seruants, and retainers: what wealth, what honours, what ioyes and pleasures they possesse. Oh how happie are they, if at the houre of death when all those shall forsake them, they haue as goodly a traine also of good workes to attend vpon them! For they that imbrace the true faith of Christ Iesus, and bring forth plentifull fruites thereof, (as Saint Paul willett Timothie to charge them that be rich in this world to be rich in good workes) shall find the comforte and ioy thereof at the hower of their death. It may be demaunded, shall men then come to blessednesse or bee saued by their owne workes? The holy scripture saith plainely, that he which is not a forgetfull hearer, but a doer of the worke, shall bee blessed in his deed, looke Iam. 1. ver. 25. And blessed are the mercifull, and blessed are the peacemakers, Matth. 5. &c. but yet wee may not bee so grosse as with the papists to hold that mens good deedes doe iustifie them, or merite eternall life: Christ is our iustification whom we apprehend by faith: good workes are the fruites of faith, and doe declare that the life and power of Christ is in vs. For before we be in him, we can doe nothing, Iohn 15 ver. 5. Moreouer, albeit they bee not of that value to merite eternall glory, our workes we doe of faith: yet God hath promised to reward them with glory, which cometh of his free grace. We are therefore, if we be wise, to endeouour not onely to shunne wicked workes, but also to abound and to be rich in all good workes. A great ioy it shall bee vnto vs at the hower of our death, when all other comforts shall faile vs: for what is it that can then do vs any good? But if we haue imbraced the truth, and studied to please God night and day, performing with a good conscience those duties which hee requireth at the handes of his children, both towards his holy maiestie, and towards men: It shall refresh vs with sweete ioy to looke backe into the race that we haue runne, it shall ease and comfort vs in the midst of all griefes which we endure in the body: and when the eyes be closed vp, a goodly troupe shall attend vpon the soule, euen of holy deedes, whose reward shall be great. We all know we shall die: wee doe all of vs confesse that our life here vpon earth, is but as a shadow and as a vapour. Wee can discourse vpon the vanitie of riches, and honours, and pleasures: what a great

follic

follic and madnes is it then for a man to haue abondance of riches whereby hee might be able to ouerflow in good workes, in aduancing the glory of God, and relieuing the needie, and doth remaine as a barren withered tree which is planted where it hath no moisture? Whatsoeuer gift God hath bestowed vpon vs whereby we may be able to doe good deedes, let vs not neglect the time, but take all occasions to be doing, that when we die our workes may follow vs, and that we may receiue the blessed reward that is promised. Some neede instruction for the soule, some reliefe for the bodie, doe what thou canst to helpe them; thou shalt heape vp treasure, and lay a good foundation against the time to come, 1. Tim. 6. But shall not the wicked men haue their workes follow them also? Yes, euen to their great shame: for all shall be accompanied. And as the good workes of the righteous doe followe them vnto their praise and glory: so the euill deedes of the wicked shall accompanie them vnto iudgement, and euen into hell, that there they may receiue the reward that those their workes haue deserued. It were well for the vngodly if they might any way wind themselves from the traine of their euill deeds: but they cannot, for they shall follow them with a loud crie for vengeance. Let all such therefore as be wise, prepare themselves for death, in doing such good workes as they may reioyce in.



The 32. Sermon.

CHAP. 14.

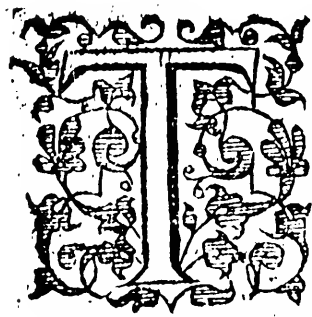
- 14 And I looked and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sitting like vnto the sonne of man, haring on his head a golden crowne, and in his hand a sharpe sickle.
- 15 And an other Angell came out of the Temple, crying with a loude voice to him that sate on the cloud, thrust in thy sickle and reape, for the time is come for thee to reape, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.
- 16 And he that sate on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.
- 17 Then an other Angell came out of the Temple which is in heauen, hauing a sharpe sickle.
- 18 And an other Angell came out from the Altar which had power ouer fire, and cryed with a loud voice to him that had the sharpe sickle, & said, thrust in thy sharpe sickle, and gather the clusters of the vineyard of the earth, for her grapes are ripe.
- 19 And the Angell thrust in his sharpe sickle on the earth, and cut downe the

V 2

grapes

grapes of the vineyard of the earth, and cast them into the great winevat of the wrath of God.

20 And the winevat was troden without the citie, and bloud came out of the winevat euen unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and sixe hundred furlongs.



Here hath beene set forth vnto vs before in this chapter, the ruine of great Babel, which is the kingdome of the beast, and the same ruine wrought by the preaching of the gospel. The light of the truth bringeth them down. There was also vengeance denounced against the worshippers of the beast, and that in most grievous manner. Now in this which I haue read vnto you, here is described their vtter ouerthrow, and the vtter ouerthrow of all the wicked, which shall be at the day of the generall iudgement. For here is a description of the last iudgement, and of the wrath of God that shall be powred forth vpon all wicked sinners. The whole matter is painted out vnder two similitudes: the one of the haruest, the other of the vintage. In the former of these similitudes, there is first a representation, or a description of our Lord Iesus the high iudge, comming in his glory to iudge the world. When he walked vpon the earth, and spake of the iudgement day, Matth. 25, he said he would come in the cloudes of heauen, and sit vpon the throne of his glorie: and here Saint Iohn sayth, I looked, and behold a white cloud, & vpon the cloud one sitting like to the Sonne of man. Here then is such a throne, and such a glorie, as all the kinges and Iudges of the earth come farre short of. They verily sit vpon high thrones, and in great maiestie vpon the earth, but the throne and the maiestie here described is far greater, for it is heauenly. There is no iudge but he that can lift vp himselfe so high as to sit in the cloudes of heauen. This is a peculiar glory to that iudge, and it is not to be passed by, that hee saith, It is a white cloud vpon which hee sitteth, for thereby is represented the vprightnes and integritie of the iudge. The iudges vpon earth doe faile often in iudgement, being caryed awrie sometime with ignorance, sometime with affections either of loue or of hatred, and somtimes through feare, yea and some no doubt at sometime are corrupted with bribes: but here is no such thing, this seate is white, euen cleere, innocent, and pure from all spot or staine. This is a right worthie commendation of the iudge, that no man shall receiue wrong iudgement from his mouth. The sentence shall bee vpright, iust, and perfect, both to the one part, and to the other.

It followeth, That this iudge sitting vpon the cloud, hath on his head a golden crowne. This sheweth his authoritie and power, for Christ is as it were crowned king of kinges, and Lord of Lords. He hath receiued all maiestie, and power, in so much that euery knee shall bowe, and all tongues shall confesse that Iesus is the Lord, to the glory of God: as here he that representeth him sitting vpon the cloud,

as

is crowned with a golden crowne. Then it is said, that hee hath a sharpe sickle in his hand. Our Sauour himselfe in certaine parables, Math. 13, likened the end of the world vnto haruest, and so accordingly in this place the last iudgement being represented by haruest, the iudge hath a sharpe sickle in his hand, with which he commeth for to reape. For a sickle is for that vse, a sickle is for haruest. But what is resembled by this sharpe sickle, may some man say? I answer, that by this sharpe sickle is signified the sharpe seueritie of iustice and vengeance, with which, all the wicked shall at the dreadfull day of iudgement be cut downe. The sentence of iustice pronounced against the by the iudge, shall they feele to be a right sharpe sickle indeed: It shall cut (as we say) euen to the bone. It shall reape them euen as corne is reaped, and they shall be bound into sheaues, and cast into the lake offire. They shall feele the sharpenes of this sickle world without end. It may be said, that the iudgement shall bee both of the iust, and of the vniust. Yea but this figure is shewed to set forth the terrible wrath against the vniust onely: for the iust shall feele no such seueritie of iudgement. It shall bee a most happie and ioyfull day vnto them, euen the day of redemption.

Then it followeth, And an other Angell came out of the Temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat vpon the cloud, thrust in thy sickle and reape, because the time is come for thee to reape, for the haruest of the earth is ripe. The Lord Iesus shall come to iudgement at the time which his father hath decreed, and therefore here commeth a commandement from the throne of God, to him that sitteth vpon the cloud to thrust in his sickle, and it is said, that the time for him to reape is come. We must also marke how he rendreth the reason, namely, that the haruest of the earth is ripe. For as men doe know when to reape their corne, namely when it is ripe and well withered: so the Lorde knoweth the time of iudgement, euen when the wickednes of the world is fullie ripe. We see great and horrible abominations daily ouerflow in the world: we may wonder at the long suffering and patience of God, yet we must not thinke that hee regardeth not, because men are let alone, but remember what is here said, that the haruest must be ripe, and then the Lord will come and cut it downe. God promised to giue the land of Canaan to Abraham, and to his seed, and for the wickednes of those nations which dwelt therein, he would destroy them to plant in his people: yet he telleth Abraham, that his seed should be so iournor foure hundred yeares. Adding moreover that they should in the fourth generation returne thither, because (saith the Lord) the sinne of the Amorite is not yet full, Gen. 15. ver. 16. As the Lord deferred to cast out and to destroy those nations vntill such time as their wickednes was grown to the full: so we learne here that he deferreth the great day of iudgement vntill the iniquities and sinnes of the earth bee fullie ripe: then is the Lorde's haruest, then will hee cut downe his corne. Doubtlesse if men haue this wisdom not to thrust in sickle vntill the corne be readie: the most high God the fountaine of all wisdom, knoweth much more the time when the sinnes of the world are come to their full ripenesse. Doubtlesse so farre as we can discern, the regions are already white vnto the haruest, we may euen looke dayly for the sharpe sickle to cut them all downe: but yet we know not but that there may be some good distance of time yet remaining to

their

their full ripenes, onely let vs bee sure the time will come of this iudgement: and therefore I beseech ye, let it bee your greatest care to stand fast in the true feare of God, that we bee not found among those that shall feeble the sharpe sickle. Then it is said, that he which sate vpon the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped. It is a great haruest, and yet this reaper can reape it all. Beholde the mightie power and strength of the iudge, which none shall bee able to withstand. For euen as the corne is easily cut downe with the sickle, and hath no power to resist the reaper, so shall all the wicked, be they neuer so many, and neuer so mightie, be cut downe with the sickle of Gods iudgement, and no way be able to resist. They shall be all as ripe corne vnto the sharpe sickle of the iudge. Men doe now encourage themselves in wickednes, because they be many y^e ioyne therein together, & because they be mighty: but let them think vpon this sharpe sickle which shall be thrust into y^e thickest of them, & shall cut them down by handfulls. The mighty warriors, the great princes, and the kings of the earth, with all their nobles and traine, shall be but as weake straw to the sickle. This iudge, when his haruest is once come, will thrust in his sharpe sickle, and cut downe euery high thing which exalteth it selfe against God. Hee will cut downe the kingdome of the great Antichrist, that Romish beast. He will cut downe the whole kingdome of darkenes: hee will cut downe the deuils themselves, there shall nothing remaine now, the whole haruest shall be reaped. O that men would consider this before hand, and be wise, and not bolden themselves for to do euill, by their strength and multitude. Now they stand so thicke, euen as whole regions of corne, and thinke there is none but they: who shall be able to hurt them? Well, let them be so, here cometh the reaper: and they shall find, that there is one too hard for them, which will destroy them all, who in deed hath a scattered remnant which he will saue. Thus haue we seene one figure by which the iudgement day is represented: but the Lord doth represent it by two, and therefore now followeth the other, which is of the vintage.

In our countrie we make no wine, and therefore this comparison is not so cleere to euery one, as that other of the haruest is, how the corne is reaped downe when it is ripe, that euery man knoweth. In the hot countries where the vines grow, when the time of the vintage cometh, the husbandman cometh with a sharpe instrument, which is here also called a sickle, & cutteth off y^e clusters of grapes. Then is there a wine-presse, and into that hee casteth those clusters, and then after that the presse is troden, to the end that the iuyce may be pressed out. Now to this the Lord compareth the destruction of the vngodly at the last day: The wicked shall be cut downe as grapes, cast into the presse and troden. If any shall demand, why this vengeance which the Lord will execute vpon the wicked at the day of iudgement, is described by two similitudes, the one of the haruest, the other of the vintage: I answer, that it is not onely to declare the full certaintie of the thing, as the holy scripture vseth to double a thing for certaintie, but also to raise men vp from their securitie and drowines. For wee see how men delight and sport themselves in all manner of abominable sins, and how little they thinke of such vengeance to come, as if their doings should neuer be called to any reckoning: yea when they do thinke of it, it is but euen as it were in a dreame, or a matter so farre off, as if it should not be:

be: and therefore that the godly may be strengthened and shake off securitie, (for the wicked will take no warning) the thing is doubled. Let vs therefore beloved, howsoeuer the Lord let wickednesse here escape vnpunished for a time, and the wicked which prouoke God doe flourish) assure our selues that there is a day coming when vengeance shall be powred forth in full measure vpon all those which haue corrupted their wayes vpon the earth.

But let vs come to the words of this text. Then another Angell came (sayth he) out of the temple which is in heauen, hauing a sharpe sickle. This Angell also representeth the Lord Iesus, who shall iudge both the quicke and the dead. He is attended into heauen, he is exalted in glorie aboue all, sitting at the right hand of God, and exercising the fulnes of all power, and from thence hee shall come with great glorie to iudge the world, as it is sayd here, that the Angell cometh out of the temple which is in heauen. He hath also a sharpe sickle, because the iudgement is likened to the vintage: for with his hooke or sickle hee will cut and gather the grapes of the earth. What it signifieth I told you before: for this sickle representeth the same thing that the sickle of him that sate vpon the white clowde, which reapeth the haruest. The sentence of iudgement shall cut downe very severely and sharply. Well, the Iudge hath this sharpe sentence readie, and expecteth the fulnes of time, which the high wisdom of God hath appoynted, when the clusters of grapes shall be fully ripe for the vintage. For so soone as that time is come, hee shall presently cut them downe, and therefore see what followeth. Another Angell came out from the Altar which had power ouer fire, and cryed with a lowde voyce to him that had the sharpe sickle, and sayd, Thrust in thy sharpe sickle and gather the clusters of the vineyard of the earth, for her grapes are ripe. Now then the time is come, because wickednes is growne to the full: the clusters are ripe, and euen ready for the wine-presse. O most wise God, which hast appointed the times and the seasons, thy patience and long suffering is great, it is meete that we should waite thy good pleasure and will, which disposeth all thinges to thy glorious praise, and to the good of thy chosen people.

But let vs come more particularly to the matter. He sayth an Angell came out from the Altar which had power ouer fire. There is some difficultie in these words, but we must be wise with sobrietie. The Lord is sayd to dwell in his holy temple in heauen. In that temple and most holy place wee haue a great high priest, our Lord Iesus, who is our Mediatour, and intercessor. There is sayd to bee an Altar, which Altar indeede he is: for hee is both priest, sacrifice and Altar. It is sayd before in this prophetic, that the soules of them that were slaine for the testimonie of Iesus, were vnder the Altar. Then wee may take it, that the time of the last iudgement is decreed in the secret counsell of God, and cometh from the innermost place in the temple to represent so much. For in the time of the law there was a golden Altar in the most holie place, euen in the presence of God. But why is this Angell sayd to haue power ouer fire, or what is meant by that, there is the difficultie? Some doe take it, that by fire here is meant the vengeance of God, which vsually in the holy Scriptures is called fire. And so they take the sense to bee this, that

the Angell is the executor of Gods wrath vpon the bloudie kingdome of Antichrist, and that hee is sayd therefore to come out from the Altar, because it is sayd before, that vnder the Altar lye the soules of those which were killed for the testimonie of Iesus, crying for vengeance. This is a godly sense, and I could yeeld vnto it, but that there is in the 16. chapter an Angell called the Angell of the waters. For thereby I take it plaine, that this is spoken of the materiall fire, because that other in chap. 16. is to bee taken of the materiall waters. Then thus wee reade, that S. Paul speaking of the exaltation of Christ, sayth, God hath placed him at his right hand in heauen, farre aboue all principallitie, and power, and might, and domination, Ephes. 1. vers. 21. By which tearmes he noteth the Angels: And they are also called thrones, principalities, mights, &c. Coloss. 1. vers. 16. These titles are giuen vnto them, because the Lord God doth vse their ministrie in ruling and preseruing the world. Then although we are not curiously to dispute, yet we may take it that God hath giuen power to some Angels ouer the fire, and to some ouer the waters, and to some ouer other creatures, for the ordering and preseruatiō of them. Then further wee are plainly taught, that at the day of iudgement, the Lorde will come in fire. For thus speaketh S. Paul, When the Lord Iesus shall be made manifest from heauen with his mightie Angels, with flaming fire, to render vengeance to all that know not God, nor obey the Gospell of our Lord Iesus Christ, 2. Thess. 1. vers. 7. Also S. Peter in his second epistle and second chapter dooth teach, that the heauens and the earth are kept for fire: and that the elements shall melt with heate, and that the earth and the things which are therein shall be burnt vp, 2. Pet. 3. Then seeing it is so, that the Lord wil come to iudgement with flaming fire, wherewith the creatures shall be burnt, we may see, that the Angell which had power ouer fire is here fitly brought in, when the iudgement shall be. When this Angell had cryed with a lowd voyce to the other, that hee should thrust in his sickle and gather the clusters of the earth, because her grapes are ripe: it followeth that by and by the Angell thrust in his sickle and cut them downe, and cast them into the great winefatte of the wrath of God. I tolde yee before, that where the wines are made, they haue a presse or fatte into which they cast the clusters, that their iuyce may bee pressed out. And according to that, it is here sayd, how the Angell cut downe the clusters of grapes of the earth, and cast them into the fatte or presse where they shall be pressed. Then what are these clusters of grapes? They be the wicked men of the world. And why are they compared to clusters? Because they grow so thicke, euen on heapes like grapes. Ye haue great parts of the worlde which renounce the name of Christ: as the Heathen, the Iewes and the Turkes. There bee very large kingdomes of some of these. Againe, come to those which acknowledge the name of our Lord Iesus Christ, what heapes and multitudes are there of idolaters? Come neerer euen to those kingdomes in which the Gospell is preached, be there no clusters among them of these stinking grapes? Verely the whole vines doe seeme to bee ouerspread almost with nothing els. It is hard to finde any great clusters of godly men any where: they bee scattered and growe thinne. When the Sonne of man shall come (sayth our Sauour) shall he find faith vpon

vpon the earth? Wee see how it is alreadie, and the worlde shall not amende, but waxe worse and worse euen to the ende, so that when the iudgement day cometh, there shall be almost nothing vpon the whole earth, but heapes of vngodly men, which are compared euen to clusters of grapes, which the Iudge cometh to cut downe with a sharpe sickle. And no more power shall there bee in all the inhabitants of the earth to resist the cutting of this sickle, then is in the clusters of the vines, to withstand the force of his sharpe hooke, which cutteth them for the vintage. Most fit then wee see is this figure to expresse the cutting downe and destruction of all the wicked which shall bee at the great day of the Lord. Then what is that great winefatte of the wrath of God into which they shall be cast? It is the place of execution, and of torment, it is hell: for all the vngodly shall be cast into hell, as into a great large winepresse: for it is the great winefatte of the wrath of God. The Prophet Esay calleth it Tophet, and describeth it thus: Tophet is prepared of old: it is euen prepared for the king: he hath made it deepe and large: the burning thereof is fire and much wood, the breath of the Lord like a riuer of brimstone, doth kindle it, Esay. 30. vers. 33. This is the great winepresse into which all the clusters of stinking grapes shall be cast, and pressed.

Now to set forth the horror of Gods vengeance vpon the wicked in hell, the allegorie is continued: for as it was sayd, that the clusters were cut downe and cast into the great fatte or winepresse, so he saith now that the fatte is troden. For when the grapes were in the presse, they had a way to tread it, to the end that the licour might issue out: and so he sayth here that this fatte is troden without the citie. This is out of all doubt, that hell is without the citie, that is, without the heavenly habitation of the iust: for all that worke wickednes shall be put apart into a place by themselves, where they shall be tormented together. For the heavenly Ierusalem is described in the ende of this propheticie, the citie of the Saints: and it is sayd that they that do keep the comandements, may enter in through the gates into the citie: and without shall be dogges, and enchanterers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whatsoeuer loueth or maketh lyes, chap. 21. vers. 15. Then it is sayd, that blood came out of the winefatte euen vnto the horse bridles. It seemeth that to tread the great winepresses they did vse not onely men, but also horses: and so according to that the figure is here expresse, when he speaketh of horses. Wee know also that when the presse is troden the iuyce of the grapes issueth out: and for that it is sayd here, that blood came out of the winefatte euen to the horse bridles. And it is sayd, by the space of a thousand and sixe hundred furlongs. Eight furlongs are a mile, then eight hundred furlongs are one hundred miles, and so the thousand and sixe hundred furlongs amount vnto two hundred miles. This is a large winepresse, as need requireth for to containe the whole multitude of the vngodly. It is not spoken to declare the iust or full bredth of hell: but by this large space, and by the blood comming forth to the horse bridles to giue vnto vs some resemblance of the wonderfull slaughter which the Lord will make of all his enemies. Men may consider by this how fearefull the vengeance is that shall be powred forth vpon all the wicked. They cluster together now like clusters.

sters of grapes, and each doth encourage and embolden other vnto all sinne, yea many comfort themselues thus; if I goe to hell, I shall haue good store of companie. Yea but the companie shall not comfort thee at all, but make the iudgement more horrible: for they shall be cast on heapes like grapes into a great lake, where they shall bee pressed together, vntill they doe euen as it were swimme in their owne blood. Let vs be warned, let vs studie to keepe a good conscience, that wee may escape from this horrible vengeance of the great God. For all woes, all sorowes, all euils and miseries shall be vpon those which shall be cast into this great wine fatte of Gods wrath. What a follie is it not onely to lose eternall glorie, but also to fall into this wofull destruction, euen for a few vncleane lusts and pleasures of sinne, which last but for a season?



The 33. Sermon.

CHAP. 15.

- 1 *And I saw another signe in heauen, great and marueilous, seuen Angels hauing the seuen last plagues: for by them is fulfilled the wrath of God.*
- 2 *And I saw as it were a glassie sea mingled with fire, and them that had gotten victorie of the beast, and of his image, and of the number of his name, stand at the glassie sea hauing the harpes of God.*
- 3 *And they sung the song of Moses the seruant of God, and the song of the Lambe, saying, Great and marueilous are thy workes Lord God almightie, iust and true are thy waies king of Saints.*
- 4 *Who shall not feare thee O Lord, and glorifie thy name, for thou art holie, and all nations shall come and worship before thee, for thy iudgements are made manifest.*
- 5 *And after that I looked, and behold the temple of the tabernacle of witnes was open in heauen.*
- 6 *And the seuen Angels came out of the temple which had the seuen plagues, clothed in pure and bright linnen, and hauing their breasts girded with golden girdles.*
- 7 *And one of the foure beasts gaue vnto the seuen Angels seuen golden vials full of the wrath of God which liueth for euermore.*
- 8 *And the temple was full of the smoke of the glorie of God and of his power, and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seuen plagues of the seuen Angels were fulfilled.*

WE had the fall of Babylon set forth in the former chapter, and how it should come to passe by the preaching of the Gospell. Wee had also a description of

of the wrath of God which shall come vpon them at the day of iudgement. And now, least we might imagine, that the worshippers of Antichrist should be let alone and flourish at their pleasure here in this world, and escape free from punishments vntill the latter day: here is a vision in two chapters, euen of purpose to set forth the plagues of God vpon the kingdome of the beast, not onely that endlesse torment before spoken of, but all the grieuous punishments which shal come vpon them in this life also. That Idolatrous and bloudie kingdome ruled long, and with mightie tyrannie oppressed the people of God, but marke now how the righteous God doth recompence them here in this world: For these two chapters doe declare and set it forth at large.

But before we come to the view of them, here are other matters to bee considered: as first, the entrance which Saint Iohn maketh vnto this vision, which is to moue and prepare the mindes of the godly vnto attention. For when matters are not common, nor such as are light or trifling, but great and wonderful, men ought to giue diligent heed, to the end therefore that we may be attentiu. Hee beginneth in this wise, And I saw an other signe in heauen great and marueilous. If the signe be as hee sayth here, great and marueilous, then let vs looke for great thinges, and such as we are to wonder at. Then he telleth what hee saw, euen seuen Angels hauing the seuen last plagues: This is the signe which he calleth great and marueilous. God doth execute his wrath and vengeance vpon the wicked by his ministers the holy Angels, which are here therefore sayd to haue the plagues in a readines, euen the seuen last plagues. Seuen is the number of perfection, and therefore it is here vsed to signifie the fulnes of al the iudgements of God against wicked sinners. They are called the seuen last plagues, because (as he sayth) the wrath of God is fulfilled in them. There is the full accomplishment and finishing of all plagues in them. They reach from the time that they beginne vnto the ende of the worlde, and the last of them beginneth that plague that shall last for euer and euer. Then in these seuen, the whole wrath of God is powred forth. There remaineth no one plague after these. Hauing thus briefly made his entrance to the matter, then before he come to declare the execution of these plagues by particular, he expresth also a vision which he had together with the same, touching the true seruants of God. For euer, when there is any grieuous thing shewed and denounced against the wicked, there is also some vision to teach, that the Lord God, euen in the midst of the execution of his vengeance, setteth his seruants in safety, so that the wrath toucheth not them. When a shower of raine commeth downe, or a storme of haile, it lighteth vpon all both good and bad, which are abroad in the fieldes. But it is not so in the tempests of Gods vengeance: for when hee raineth downe the same from heauen, although the good be mingled in the world with the bad, yet hee preserueth them. This whole matter of the preservation of the good, is declared by a figure. For it is likened to the safe passage of the children of Israell through the red sea, in which their enemies which pursued them were all ouerwhelmed and drowned. For when the children of Israell came out of Egypt, Pharaoh pursuing them with his hoast, the Lord parted the waters of the red sea, so that the tribes passed through

through on drie land, the waters standing as a wall on both sides, as Moses reporteth, Exod. 14. King Pharaoh and his whole armie doe follow them, and the waters ouerwhelme them, so that not one of them escapeth. Saint Iohn therefore saith, that he saw as it were a glassie sea mingled with fire. This glassie sea representeth the world, which is euen a gulf full of tempestes, and stormes of afflictions, troubles, temptations, and daungers of all sortes. In this sea the deuill that great Pharaoh, with all his armies pursueth the seruants of God. But it is a glassie sea, it is so hard to the faithfull that they go vpon it as vpon firme ground. They passe through the sharp afflictions in it, for he saith it is mingled with fire. This fire doth not consume them, but it doth purge them: for they be in it as gold is in the furnace, which consumeth not by the fire, but the drosse is burnt out, and so it becommeth more pure. Saint Iohn saith therefore, that he saw them standing at the glassie sea, euen al those that had gotten the victorie of the beast, and of his image, and of the number of his name. He saw them as hauing passed through, and now standing vpon the shoare. For he alludeth to the armie of Israel, which being passed through the red sea stood vpon the shoare and beheld how their enemies were drowned. For al they which stedfastly cleaue to the holy word of God, and worship him in truth, euen with that holy and pure worship which he himselfe hath prescribed keeping themselves free from Idolatrie, and superstition, and from all the abominations of the Romish beast, all they (I say) are here said to haue passed through this sea, and to stand at the shoare. For albeit they be but in passing many of them, yet in vision they appeare as set in safetie vpon the shoare, because their victorie and saluation is as certaine, and out of doubt, as if it were alreadie finished. But as for their enemies, it is not a glassie sea to them, so hard as to bee safelie trod vpon, but a deuouring gulf which doth swallow them vp vnto perdition. The fire which is mingled in it doth not purge them, but is as the beginning of those flames of wrath that shal burne and torment them for euer. For all the plagues of God which follow in this vision, and all other afflictions which come vpon the wicked idolaters here in this life, doe not bring them to repentance, and so draw them neerer vnto God but are as I said, euen the beginning of the flames of Gods wrath, yea euen a certaine entrance into hell. These are ouerwhelmed, and drowned in the sea of this worlde, euen as Pharaoh and all his armie were in the red sea.

But to returne againe to the godly, S. Iohn saith, he saw them hauing the harps of God. What are these harpes of God but instruments of melodie? They are the spirituall ioy, the gladnes, and the comfort which God hath giuen them, with which they prepare themselves to sing praises to the Lord for the victorie and deliuerance which they haue obtained through his blessing and free grace. For looke how it is said, that the Israelites being come to the shoare, and there beheld the Egyptians dying, Moses and they did sing a song of praise to God, both for their deliuerance, and for the ouerthrow of their enemies, Exod. 15. so is it said here, that they which get the victorie of the beast, passing safe through the gulf of this worlde, standing at the shoare, and beholding the greatnes of their owne deliuerance through the grace of God, and the iudgements and wrath of the Lorde vpon their enemies,

haue

haue harps where with they prepare themselves to sing praises to God for the same. And he sayth, they did sing the song of Moses the seruant of God: not that these holy worshippers doe sing the same words of that song of Moses, Exod. 15. but he continueth the figure, and the meaning is that they laud and magnifie the Lord for their deliuerance, and for his iudgements which he executeth vpon their enemies, as Moses and the children of Israell did for theirs out of the red sea. It is then the song of Moses, in that they extoll the name of the Lord as Moses did, that saucth them from drowning in this great tempestuous sea of the world, and that with his plagues ouerwhelmeth their wicked enemies in the same: as Moses and the Israelites praised God, so do these: this is the song of Moses. Hee saith also, that they did sing the song of the Lambe. This must needs be: It is meete they should sing the song of the lamb, for it is through the blood of the lamb, that they get the victory: the lambe is their great captain by whose conduct they passe through this great sea. The Lambe doth teach them how to offer vp their praises, and thanks, and honour, and glorie, to God his father, through his name. It is therefore the song of the lambe. And it is a right ioyfull and sweete melodie which they make with their harpes, being the harpes of God. They sing with exceeding great ioy and gladnes of mind.

In the time of the lawe, God appointed that there should bee muscull instruments and melodie in the publike assemblie where they did praise him. What shal we thinke that the Lord God taketh pleasure in sweete tunes? No, but when men praise him with ioy and gladnes of heart, that is acceptable vnto him. And what a dull and dead praising of God is it, if men vtter with the mouth, and take not delight and pleasure in their hart in his praise? If to magnifie and praise the high name of God bee as pleasant and delightfome to the heart, as the sweetest musicke is to the eare, then doe men praise him indeed: Then doe they loue his glorie. And to shew this were those instruments of musick in the publike worship vnder the law. And to that which was the manner then, doth this vision allude, saying, that these had the harpes of God, that is, they extoll and praise God with great ioye and gladnes of heart. It is the sweetest and the most comfortable melodie vnto them that can be, to glorifie the Lord. Here must wee looke to our selues, whether wee haue these harpes of God: for we come together and make shewe that wee praise our God. If we doe it of custome or fashion, and not with delight and gladnes of heart, taking more pleasure therein, then in all the sweetest melodie in the worlde, we haue not the harpes of God; our praise is not acceptable vnto him. Well now let vs see what their song is. It is in these wordes, Great and meruailous are thy works Lord God Almighty, iust and true are thy waies, king of Saints. Who shal not feare thee O Lord, and glorifie thy name, for thou art holy, and al nations shal come and worship before thee, for thy iudgements are made manifest?

Before I lay open the particular poynts of this worthie song, it shal not bee amisse to consider well to whom it is sung, I meane whose praise it setteth forth, or to whom it ascribeth all glorie. Reade it ouer, and marke it well, and you shal find that it magnifieth the praise of God alone, and not of any creature. Yea reade in

all

all places of this booke, where either the Angels in heauen, or the Church in earth doe praise and magnifie the great God, and ye shall finde that there is no creature worshipped, and glorified with him. Nay I may say further, reade and search all the whole Bible, both the old Testament and the new, euen all the writings of the Prophets and Apostles, which haue deliuered to the world the doctrine of the Lambe, and ye shall not finde any where, that any Angel or Saint is worshipped, and praised with diuine worship. The word of God, which is the doctrine of the Lambe, out of which this song is drawne, and therefore called the song of the Lambe, teacheth men to ascribe all glorie, and praise, and worship, and honour, and maiestie to God alone. And that there is no creature in heauen or earth worthie to be ioyned with him, to bee partaker with him in his glory, or to be worshipped with any part of his worship. For looke what the creatures haue, they haue receiued it from him, and are all of them, though some be more glorious then other, to worship and praise his name together. There is no one to be set vp so high, as to haue any part of his glorie. It is wicked sacriledge, and blasphemous impietie, to take any part of the diuine worship and praise, and to giue it to any creature. The Church therefore being taught by the Lambe, and altogether guided by his spirit, doth sing this ioyfull song of the Lambe. They worshippe, they praise, they magnifie, and extoll the name of the Lord God almightie, ioyning none other with him. It is not therefore the song of the Lambe which is sung in the popish Church, because they worship and praise and magnifie creatures, they giue thanks vnto them as vnto patrones and mediators vpon whom they call, and vnto whom they ascribe their deliuerance and preservation. The Dragon, and that beast with two hornes haue taught their songs, of which their Masse booke is full. For they that reade them, if they haue their eyes opened, shall see them stuffed full of blasphemous sacrilegies, while they worship the creatures, and ascribe vnto them the glorie and praise which is due onely to God and to his sonne Iesus Christ. Which part then is it best and safest for vs to follow? Shall we ioyne with these that stand at the glassie sea, which haue gotten the victorie of the beast, in praising God alone? Or shall wee ioyne with the Church of Rome, which honoureth euen with diuine honour, the creatures, in stead of the creator? Shall we worship God onely, (as the Lambe teacheth, Matth. 4.) or shall we ioyne with the papists that worship and glorifie the creatures, with the glorie & worship that is peculiar to God? In their Masse booke they haue songs of praise to the Virgin Mary, in which they call her their Mediatrix, and say she is placed in the throne with God the Father, and that she raigneth with God: this is in the Masse of her Assumption. They call her the starre of the sea, the Mother of grace, the fountaine of mercie, in the Masse of her Visitation. They call her the cause of saluation, and the gate of life, in the Masse of her Purification. They craue by her grace to bee set in the haue of saluation, in the Masse of her Conception. They pray that they may bee deliuered from the flames of hell, by the merites and prayers of Saint Nicholas. What should I stand in making particular rehearfall, they worship the Saints, and ascribe vnto them the office of Mediators, which belongeth onely to Christ. Shall wee, I say,

ioyne

ioyne with them in this their wicked sacriledge? No, let vs ioyne with the true Catholike Church, and worship God onely, for so doe the Angels and Saints in heauen. For there is no creature worthie to be ioyned with God, to haue any part of diuine worship: he is God ouer all to be praised for euer.

And now let vs come to the matter of this song. I will not diuide it into any parts, but shew euery branch as it lieth. They first proclaime that the workes of God are great & marueilous. We may vnderstand this generally of all the workes of God, which the faithfull doe behold and wonder at: and wee may restraîne it to the particulars here in hand. The generall doth reach to the wonderfull creatiō, and setting vp the frame of the whole world, with all other things which haue fallen out in the gouernment and preservation thereof. The particulars here in hand, are the great and miraculous preservation of the true belecuers in this gulfe of the world, that the Dragon and the beast doe not drowne them: and the execution of Gods iudgements vpon them that worship the beast. All circumstances considered, they be both to be greatly wondred at. And in them both, the Lord doth euidently declare that he is almightie, as they doe here praise him. What are the faithfull in themselves in comparison of the Dragon and of the beast, which pursue them in the sea of this world? It is the mightie hand of God that bringeth them safe to the shore. It is the miraculous power of God from heauen that preserveth them, for which they doe celebrate his praise. Again, that the Lord plagueth such mightie enemies and pulleth them downe, yea bringeth to ruine that mightie monarchie of Antichrist the wonder of the world, it euidently manifesteth his almightie power and providence, which none can withstand. All things are great, all things are marueilous in these his workes, if our eyes were open and cleere to behold them.

Then it followeth, Iust and true are thy wayes, king of Saints. As in the former clause, they celebrate the praise and glorie of God, in that his almightie power hath manifested it selfe by workes great and wonderfull: so in this they magnifie him, that as a iust king, ruling and iudging with vprightnes, all his wayes are iust and true. When he executeth vengeance in most sharpe and seuer manner vpon the wicked, it seemeth vnto the sense and wisdom of the flesh, to bee cruell rigour, and the vngodly doe murmure and fret at it: but all the faithfull, which haue their mindes lightened with the grace of the holy Ghost, doe see cleerely, that all his waies are iust, and so they glorifie and praise him for his righteous iudgements, and plagues, executed vpon the wicked. And looke whatsoeuer he hath vttered in his holy word, either in promises to those that obey him, or in threatnings against the rebellious, he performeth the same, and so all his wayes are true. The vnfaithfull see the godly passe through great afflictions in this life, and they imagine that the promises which are made to such as feare the Lord are but words. Again, they behold that wicked men for a time doe flourish and prosper euen in the midst of their wickednes, and they promise to themselves safetie from all euill, as if all the threatnings of God against the euill doers should come to nothing. This maketh them so bold in dishonoring God: but the godly doe see that nothing

shall

shall fall to the ground of all that hath proceeded out of the mouth of God, and therefore they proclaimie that his wayes are true. In that they giue the Lord this title, that he is king of Saints, we must not so vnderstand it, as if he were king onely ouer them, and not also ouer the vnholie, but that the Saints doe receiue good by his kingdome. He is their king to defend them, to comfort them, and to let them vp in life and glorie, his kingdome is their ioy. He hath also dominion and dooth raigne ouer the wicked, but so as it is to their griefe and endles woe. For as in a kingdome the faithfull subiects receiue much good, and doe reioyce in their iust, victorious and mightie king, and contrariwise the rebels doe feelee his power to their griefe: so is it in the Lords kingdome. The iust receiue all good, but the rebels are troden downe, and shall feelee his iustice, his hand and power, to their eternall woe.

It is then added, Who shall not feare thee O Lord, and glorifie thy name, for thou art holie? The Lord is so great a king, that he is to be feared and glorified of all. The good doe feare him with a reuerend feare that is ioyned with loue: and they doe delight in setting forth his praise and glorie, euen the glorie of his great name. And the wicked which doe despise him, shall be made to tremble & quake at his presence with seruill feare: and albeit they loue him not nor his glorie, yet shall he be glorified by them, yea he is glorified in their destruction. For howsoeuer they shall curse and blaspheme in their horrible torments, yet the iust shall proclaim that therein he is holie, and that he sheweth no rigour nor crueltie, but layeth that which is iust vpon them. It is sayd further, All nations shall come and worship before thee, for thy iudgements are made manifest. By this it is shewed, that howsoeuer the multitudes in the world doe conspire together in casting off the yoke of the Lord, and rebelling against him, yet they shall in the ende at the full manifestation of his iudgements bow before him, and acknowledge him to be Lord and king ouer all. We see daily what desperate boldnes there is in many, as if they were lawles and vnder no king. We may see also (if we bee not wonderfull blind) that some of the most wicked, which seemed to bee armed against all terror, at some strange hand of God vpon them, do tremble and bow for the time: how much more then shall all the stoutest be made to bow before him, and to acknowledge his supreme power and gouernement, at the terrible day of vengeance? when all nations shall come and worship before him, when (as the Apostle Paul sayth) all knees shall bow vnto him, and euery tongue shall confesse that Iesus is the Lord, to the praise of God. It is good therefore that we acknowledge the Lord to be king, and that with all dutifulnes, we submit our selues to the obedience of his holiesome lawes, and so worship and glorifie him with holy worship. The rebels shall enioy none of them euen to the stoutest, be made to stoop before him, and to confesse his soueraigne power, when it shall be to their griefe and sorrowe: but the Saints shall reioyce in their king, whom they haue carefully obeyed and worshipped. And thus haue we seene the ioyfull triumphant song of those which stood at the glassie sea, which had gotten the victorie of the beast, of his image, and of the number of his name. The battell yet continueth betweene the beast

and

and the faithfull, and if we be not of this companie, which with the harpes of God doe sing this song of victorie to our Lord God, we are but in euill case: for if wee get not the victorie we drowne in this horrible sea. The true worshippers being thus set in safetie vpon the shore, hee returneth to the description of the plagues which are powred forth vpon the kingdome of the beast. After that (sayth he) I looked, and behold the temple of the tabernacle of witnes was open in heauen. This booke setteth forth the matters vnder figures, and it alludeth to the figures which were vnder the law. There was the temple, which was as a signe that God did dwell among them: for it was as the royall palace of their king. In this temple, there was the most holy place, where was the arke of couenant, and the mercie seate: euen the signe of Gods presence. To shew therefore that these seuen last plagues doe come from the counsell and decree of the most high God vpon the kingdome of the beast, the tabernacle is open in heauen, and the seuen Angels which haue the seuen last plagues come out from thence. The destruction of the kingdome of Antichrist, and all plagues vpon the popish worshippers come from the throne of God in heauen. He sendeth forth the ministers of his wrath, which doe execute his will in plaguing the wicked. These holy ministers the blessed Angels, are ready with all integritie to doe his will: and therefore he sayth, they were clothed in pure bright linnen, and girded at their breasts, with golden girdles. Then it is sayd that one of the foure beasts gaue vnto the seuen Angels, seuen golden vials full of the wrath of God which liueth for euermore. I will not take vpon me to speake further touching the ministrie of Angels then thus, that the Lord God doth vse them as his ministers, both for the preservation of the good, and for the execution of his iudgements vpon the wicked, as we see in this place. He sayth the vials are of gold, because the workes of God are pure and precious euen in the destruction of the wicked. It is sayd that they are full of the wrath of God, that we may know that y Lord wil be thoroughly reuenged vpon his enemies. And that he sayth it is the wrath of God that liueth for euermore, it amplifieth the griuoulnes of it. For the wrath of princes is heauie, but it hath an end, because they dye: but the wrath of God neuer endeth, because he liueth for euer. Then last of al he saith, that the temple was full of the smoke of the glorie of God, and of his power, and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seuen plagues of the seuen Angels were fulfilled. This dooth allude to that which is written, 1. King. 8. where it is sayd, that the cloude filled the house of the Lord so, that the priests could not stand to minister. This smoke signifieth the presence of the Lord, and his glorie. And wee must note that the same are represented vnto vs by a thicke, and darke clowd of smoke, because his iudgements are vnsearchable, and none can behold his glorie: but when all the plagues are fulfilled, which shall be at the last day, then shall we haue a more full sight of his maiestie so farre as creatures may, and see into vprightnes of all his wayes. And thus much for this time.

X

The



The 34. Sermon.

CHAP. 16.

- 1 And I heard a great voice out of the Temple, saying to the seven Angels, goe your waies, powre out the seven vials of the wrath of God, vpon the earth.
- 2 And the first Angell went and powred forth his viall vpon the earth: and there fell a noisome grienous sore vpon the men which had the marke of the beast, and vpon them which worshipped his image.
- 3 And the second Angell powred forth his viall vpon the sea, and it became as the bloud of a dead man, and euery liuing thing dyed in the Sea.
- 4 And the third Angell poured forth his viall vpon the founaines and fountaines of waters, and they turned to bloud.
- 5 And I heard the Angell of the waters say, Lord thou art iust, which art and which wast holy, because thou hast Iudged these things.
- 6 For they shed the bloud of the Saints and Prophets, and therefore thou hast giuen them bloud to drinke: for they are worthy.
- 7 And I heard an other Angell out of the Altar saying, euen so Lord God almightie, true and righteous are thy iudgements.
- 8 And the fourth Angell poured forth his viall vpon the sunne, and it was giuen vnto him to torment men with heate of fire.
- 9 And men boiled in great heat, and blasphemed the name of God which hath power ouer these plagues, and they repented not to giue him glorie.



As I had in the former chapter, as it were the preparation of the seven last plagues which were to be poured forth vpon the kingdome of the beast, and now in this chapter followeth the execution of the same. The Angels had the vials full of the wrath of God deliuered vnto them, and were in a readines, but did not poure them forth vntill they had commaundement from their Lorde God. And therefore he sayth, he heard a great voice out of the Temple, which willed them to poure them forth. The Lord vseth the ministrie of Angels, and as we see they depend wholly vpon his wil. They stay till he command, they presently fulfill his commaundement, and leaue nothing yndone which he willet. There is a perfect obedience in them: so that our Saviour teacheth vs to pray, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heauen. Wee may note yet further in this first verse, that they are willed not to distill as it were by

by drops, or by little and little, but to poure forth the vials of the wrath of God vpon the earth. The vials are full, and must as it is sayd be poured forth, which sheweth that God is so highly displeased, that he will execute vengeance vpon the enemies of his truth in great measure. Wee may not wonder that the Lord is so wrath against the popish worship, and worshippers: For there is in it the corrupting of all his holy ordinances, and the very worship of deuils, in maintenance wherof, they murder the seruants of God. Such as haue any true sight in them must needs confesse that these are most horrible things. Well, the Angels receiuing charge, the first then poureth forth his viall vpon the earth, and there fell a noisome and grienous sore vpon the men which had the mark of the beast, and vpon them that worship his image.

For the better vnderstanding of these plagues, wee must vnderstand, that as the great citie of Antichrist is called spiritually Sodome and Egypt, chap. 11. so the plagues which the Lord plagueth them withall, are set forth sundrie of them vnder the same names that those are, with which Pharaoh and his people of Egypt were stricken. Wee reade in Exodus, chap. 9. that God commanded Moses and Aaron to take their handfulls of the ashes of a furnace, and to cast them into the aire before Pharaoh, which they did, and there followed a sore all ouer Egypt vpon men, yea euen vpon the inchaunters themselues, so that they could not stand before Pharaoh for the grienousnes of the sore. This was the sixth plague of Egypt: and of the seven last plagues which are poured forth vpon the kingdome of the great Antichrist, which hath held the Church in thraldome & bondage as Egypt did, it is the first. But now it may be demaunded what sore this should be? The plague sore is very grienous, and that hath ragged mightilie among the papists: but it will bee said that the Churches of the protestants haue not beene free from the same, but are diuers times sharply chastised therewith: and here hee speaketh of a sore which is more peculiar to the popish sort, first to their votaries which haue the marke of the beast, and then to the common multitude which worship his image. There is a newe sore which is called the french pocke, which is a most grienous, and a most loathsome disease. It is called also *Morbus Neapolitanus*, the disease of Naples, because it began first there. For about the yeare of our Lord 1424. the French-men and the Spaniards warring at Naples, this most filthie disease grew among them from the whores which were there in great number with them, being a sore that was neuer heard of before that time. This sore (as it cannot bee denied) is sometimes taken by the infection of others, and so by that meanes lighteth vpon some honest persons: but vsually it lighteth vpon filthie whore-mongers, being a most loathsome plague cast vpon them for their vncleane life. Now we may reade in the first chapter of the epistle of Saint Paul to the Romanes, that when the Gentiles tooke vpon them to represent the inuisible God by images and likenesses, and so turned the glory of the incorruptible God, into the similitude of a corruptible man, and of birdes and creeping thinges: God gaue them ouer into a reprobate sense, and into vile lusts to defile themselues. Euen so in the poperie, when they became so wicked as to make the similitudes of the inuisible and most glorious Godhead, not onely in likenes of a corruptible man as the heathen, but also (which is horrible

ble and blasphemous) like a man hauing three faces in one : and likewise when they did worship those images, and others also of Saints, the Lord gaue them ouer into all vncleannes. For where the spirituall whoredome is committed, the bodily whoredome followeth. Hereupon it came to passe in the poperie, that whoredome & all filthines not to be named, did overflow especially among those which had the speciall marke of the beast, as among the great prelates, the Monkes, the Friers, and the Nunnes. The earth was filled with the stinke of their horrible filthines and whoredoms. And vpon these the Lord hath also sent this noisome sore, so that it hath beene among them for the space of this hundreth yeares. It hath light vpon the popish French-men, Spaniards, & Italians, which are they that most deuoutly worship the image of the beast, but especially vpon their Bishops, Abbots, priests, Monkes, Friers, and Nunnes, as writers doe report. Thus much for this plague, which is the first of the seauen.

It followeth, And the second Angell poured out his vial vpon the sea, and it became as the blood of a dead man, and euery living thing died in the sea. This is a fore plague to the kingdome of the beast, that the sea is turned into blood, as the waters in Egypt were. But what is meant here by the sea, and how is this turning into blood to be expounded? It is said in the 13. chapter, that the beast, that is, the Romane empire, rose out of the sea: where by the sea is meant the wauering, tempestuous, and troublesome state of the nations, full of tumults, vprores, and seditions. For the state of the nations for these respects may wel be compared to a tempestuous sea. This broiling sea then of the kingdomes, among which and out of which the beast ariseth, is turned into blood, yea like to the blood of a dead man which is loathsome and putrifying, which words are vsed to continue the allegorie. Then when ye see what is meant by the sea in this booke, yee may easily perceiue what way it is turned into blood. The sword turneth this sea of the people into blood. The warres, the cruell warres, are here represented, which God would send vpon the popish kingdomes. There hath beene much bloodshed in all ages, and among all nations, but most horrible in the kingdomes of the poperie, and especially of latter times. The Popes themselues (as histories do report) haue been the chiefe raisers vp of warres in setting the kings at variance: for the vial of Gods wrath which the Angell poureth forth, giueth scope to the deuill to worke mischief. The deuill he practiseth by his vicar Antichrist, and filleth all the kingdomes full of blood, and so destroyeth infinite thousands of living things. The Psalmist saith of the Egyptians, hee turned their waters into blood, and slewe their fishe. To that same hee alludeth here, saying, that euery living thing dyed in this sea, the waters thereof being turned into blood. This may also be extended to the famines, to the dearthes, and to the pestilences which haue followed the warres, and through which innumerable multitudes haue beene deuoured. Wee had the description of a most horrible destroying armie, killing and destroying great multitudes of idolatrous wicked people, which very fitly representeth the cruell wasting armies of the Turkes, and although that hath beene described before, yet is it not here vtterly excluded. For the great Turke hath beene a chiefe doer in turning this sea into blood, and that in dreadfull wise in sundrie places vnder

the

the popes dominion, and especially within little more then one hundreth yeares past. I will not enter into the declaration of particulars to declare these things but such as will be further satisfied in them, let them read the histories which describe the wyrrres, the bloodsheds, the commotions, the seditions, the tumults, and the slaughters which haue beene in Italie, Fraunce, Germanie, Hungarie, and other countries of Europe, and see whence they sprung. It will be said that warres come vpon all lands, as well where the gospel is preached, as where the poperie is maintained. It is true, for the wrath of God is pronoked by many in all landes, not onely where his word is denyed, but also where it is openly professed. For where it is plentifully preached, many despise it vtterly & haue it in derision, euen like to swine which tread pretious pearles vnder their feete. Also some like dogs rend and teare them that bring it. Others, and y not a few of them which professe it, doe not frame their liues so well as they ought, but cause the weak to stumble, & open the mouths of the enemies to blaspheme and to raile vpon the holy waye of God. For these things the Lord sendeth chastisements, as sicknes, famine, and bloudie warres, to correct his people for their amendment. Although we may say God is displeased, yet it is his mercie and fatherly chastisement to his true worshippers. It is farre otherwise in the gulf of the papacie, where the shedding of the blood hath beene farre greater, and not to their amendment, but euen in wrath. For there, as I sayd before, are the most horrible blasphemies and abominations committed, which pull downe bitter plagues vpon them. Thus much touching the second plague: now to the third.

And the third Angell poured forth his viall vpon the riuers and fountaines of waters, and they were turned to blood. As in the former it was saide, that the sea was turned into blood, so now hee saith all the fresh waters of which men vse to drinke, doe also become blood. This setteth forth the same plague in some sort, but yet another, because it toucheth more neerely and in an higher degree. When the waters of the sea are blood it is a plague, but when it lighteth vpon the fresh waters it is a forer plague, because of the speciall vse which men haue of them. The plague of warres then and bloodsheds among the papists, are here compared with the plague of Egypt, by which their riuers and fountaines were turned into blood, and they were constrained to digge into the ground to get waters to drinke. O how dolefull, and how heauie a case is it, when men are made to drinke blood instead of pure refreshing waters. This turning the waters into blood is spoken hyperbolically, to declare the horribleness of the slaughters that should bee made among the worshippers of the beast. Al ouerfloweth and aboundeth so with blood, that they haue giuen vnto them their owne blood to drinke. For so it is meant, as we may see by the next wordes, which the Angell of the waters is sayde for to vtter.

And I heard (saith Saint Iohn) the Angell of the waters say, Lord thou art iust, which art and which wast holy, because thou hast iudged these things. The Lord God in the gouernement and preseruacion of the world vscth the ministrie of Angels, (as I said before:) and before in chap. 14. we had the Angell brought in, which

had power ouer fire, and now the Angell of the waters: because there he speaketh of vengeance that shall bee executed at the last day by fire, and here of the plague vpon the waters. This Angell proclaimeth, that the eternall God which is, which was, and which shall be (for so we may translate it) is iust, because he hath iudged these things. This latter clause sheweth, that it is to be takē that the vchangeable God declareth himselfe to bee iust by taking vengeance. When he suffereth the wicked to range vpon the earth at their pleasure, to corrupt and defile all things, to blaspheme his name, to tread downe his holy worship, and to murder his faithfull seruants; all holy Angels doe know, and so doe the faithfull among men, that although there be no execution of iustice and iudgement for a time, but the same is deferred and delayed, yet hee is a most righteous iudge, and will in due time, which is knowne to his holy wisdom, stand vp to doe his office. It is vnpossible that he should let goe the execution of iustice: for he is the iudge of the whole world, he is iustice and iudgement it selfe. And therefore vnles he can be changeable and denie himselfe, he cannot leaue iustice vnexecuted. When he dooth declare himselfe by execution, then doe the creatures see it, and acknowledge that he is iust, as the Angell here sayth, because thou hast iudged these things.

If we consider well of the matter, as it is in the Lord himselfe, it is very certaine that he doth not become iust, because he iudgeth these things: but indeede he iudgeth these things because hee is iust. For the execution of this iustice, is the effect of a cause which is precedent. But as I sayd, the Angell speaketh so, because by iudging he manifesteth to the creatures, that he is a iust & a most righteous iudge. For the creatures cannot see the things which are in God, but as he reuealeth the. We poore men, beholding most horrible enormities & abominations ouerspreading the earth, and perceiuing no vengeance of God to follow, but all to passe away smoothly, as if he regarded not the matter, are often halfe amazed: but when the time commeth, and iustice is executed, then wee cry out, Lord thou art iust, because thou hast iudged these things, that is, wee see by this execution, that thou art a iust God, and wilt not suffer wickednes to escape unpunished. This is a very necessary doctrine for vs to be wel perswaded in, that God is a righteous iudge. For if we be not, we shall with the wicked bee boldened vnto the committing of all sinne. For they seeing, as Salomon sayth, that sentence is not executed speedily agaynst a matter, and their hearts are full in them to doe wickedly: they imagine that they shall euer escape, because they doe escape for the present time. And this is it that the Psalmist sayth, The foole hath sayd in his heart there is no God: they are corrupt and become abominable. For he that faith in his heart that iust vengeance shall not bee executed vpon all wickednes, denyeth that there is any righteous iudge. And if there be no righteous iudge, then is there any God? Surely God is a most righteous iudge. Indeepe it is so that hee dooth not punish all offences here in this life, but reserueth them vnto the great day, but yet hee letteth not the wicked altogether escape vntill that time, but meeteth with them now and then, and that in such sort that the faithfull doe see plainly it is Gods hand, and doe proclaim when they see the vengeance, as the Prophet sayth in the Psalme, Surely there

there is a God that iudgeth in the earth, doubtles there is a reward for the righteous, Psal. 58. Whereby we may see it is a great bridle to the seruants of God, euen for to restraine them from wicked sinnes, that they behold how God executeth some vengeance vpon the vngodly in this world, as also it is an encouragement to set them forward in the way of righteousness without fainting. For beholding that he is so seuer a iudge agaynst the euill doers, they must needs collect that he will plentifully reward such as doe obey his holy will.

Then the Angell addeth further, For they shed the blood of the Saints and Prophets, and therefore thou hast giuen them blood to drinke: for they are worthie, least it might seeme ouermuch rigour and seueritie that God dooth plague the wicked ones withall in giuing them blood to drinke: and that they doe as it were swimme in blood, the Angell expresth their sinne, by which they haue deserued such horrible punishment, and for which he sayth they are worthie to be so handled. They haue many grievous sinnes those Idolaters, both agaynst the first table of the law, and agaynst the second: but here is but one named, which is both for the greatnes, and also that the plague is fitted vnto it. Touching the greatnes of the sinne that it might appeare, he calleth them the Prophets and Saints, whom they slew. The Prophets are the teachers of the Gospell, and the Saints are all the true beleeuers. These be all the children of the most high God, they be very deare and precious vnto him. Al mē ought to loue and regard them highly for their fathers sake. Then how horrible a sinne is it not onely to despise, to hate, and to reproch them, but also most cruelly to murder and kill them. What plague can bee sufficient for such despite offered to God? If one should take the children of a king and intreate them in such cruel and despitefull manner, hauing not deserued euill, who would not say that the sharpest death were too little for such villaines? And what are the greatest kings of the earth, in comparison of the high God? The dignitie of the children is according to the dignitie of their father. Then may we see that they which cruelly murder the Prophets and Saints, are worthie of all torments. As the Angell sayth here, for they are worthie. This may stop the mouth of man, when he shall repine at the seuerer plagues which God sendeth vpon the world. Their sinne is so great that they be worthie. Who then can charge God with ouermuch rigour or seueritie? Shall the wicked world worship the diuell, and performe his will in murdering the holy seruants of God, and shall not God plague them for so doing? This for the greatnes of their offence, now for the fitnes of the plague. They shed blood, so cruell and sauage they bee, and the Lord giueth them blood to drinke. They shed blood among themselues, euen vntill they doe as it were drinke their owne blood. They that reade the histories, shall finde how the Papists haue murdered the true worshippers, and how euen among them agayne there haue followed cruell slaughters: and the cruell persecutors especially haue been as it were bathed in their owne blood. The Lord doth thus fit his plagues to their sins. The Egyptians were so cruell and bloudie, that they tooke the male children of the Hebrewes when they were borne and cast them into the riuers, at the time when

Moses was borne, and when Moses was sent the same rivers were turned into blood: So the plague it fitted to their sinne. At this plague there is another Angell whom S. Iohn heard from the Altar, saying, Euen so Lord God almightie, true and righteous are thy iudgements. That this Angell also is sayd to proclaime that God plagueth iustly, and is heard from the Altar, it hath this sense, that God reuengeth the blood of his martyrs. For at the opening of the fift scale, Saint Iohn sayth, he saw the soules of them that were killed for the testimonie of Iesus, vnder the Altar. This voyce then commeth as it were from them, and in their behalfe. Their blood cryeth aloud for vengeance, and the Lord beginneth to execute some part of the same vpon the seruants of Antichrist while they bee vpon the earth: and reserueth their full reward vntill the great daye, when hee will powre out all his wrath. Thus much as concerning the third plague.

And the fourth Angell powred forth his viall vpon the sunne, and it was given vnto him to torment men with heate of fire. This fourth Angel, as we see, powreth forth his vial vpon the Sun in the heauens, to this end & purpose, that we may know that no part of the world may be free from bringing plagues to these wicked Idolaters. For the first was vpon the earth, the second vpon the sea, the third vpon the fountaines and riuers, and this fourth vpon the Sunne. For as they dishonour the creator, who is God ouer all to bee blessed for euer, so all the parts of the worlde which are his creatures, which shewe forth his glorie, and were made to serue man, are armed to execute his wrath vpon such wicked rebels. The earth, the sea, and the riuers with all fountaines of waters, doe affoord what plagues they are appoynted from below, and the Sunne from the heauens on high doth his part. For by this, men boyle in heate, and are tormented. Wee doe all know by experience, that the Sunne is of wonderfull great and necessarie vse to the inhabitants of the earth, not onely for his light, but also for his cherishing heate, by which things grow and waxe ripe. Now the plague commeth when the heate thereof becommeth immoderate, whereby not only the fruites of the earth and al greene things are scorched and dried vp, but also the bodies of men are distimpered. Hereupon follow dearths, and sundrie grievous diseases, as pestilences, and hot agues, with many noysome and grievous paines. This plague hath been fore in the hot countries which are popish, as in Spayne, Portugall, France, and Italy. And he sayth that men boyled in heate, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power ouer these plagues: and they repented not to giue him glorie. Here is set forth what effect these plagues worke among the wicked. Yea verely we are here taught that there is not that effect which ought to bee, but the cleane contrarie. When the Lord sendeth plagues, men ought by and by to enter into this consideration, that hee is a iust iudge, and that they haue by their sinnes prouoked him to wrath. Then ought they to be sorrowfull, to bee humbled, and to repent that they haue dealt so ingratiouly, against so louing and so gracious a God. They ought to glorifie and praise him by all the wayes and meanes which they can, whom they haue so wickedly dishonoured. And doubtes the children of God

doe

doe this: but the wicked reprobate when he chastiseth them doe quite contrarie. They dishonour him, and when hee dooth strike them, although their conscience doth accuse them of wickednesse, and they doe in some sort acknowledge that God sendeth the plagues, and can either increase or diminish them, yet such is their proude stiffenes, that they are nothing humbled, but the sharper his rods be, the more they doe blaspheme him.

Many wayes haue the wicked idolatrous papists blasphemed the holy name of God: and first this is common to them al, to raile vpon the holie Gospell, and to charge it to bee the cause of all euils. Then further, it is an vsuall thing among the Italians and Spanyards in their furie and rage to vtter blasphemous speeches directly agaynst God. The whole Papisme aboundeth with such monstres. And doubtes the more heauily the hand of God doth presse such, the more abundantly they vomit out their peyson. But now it will bee sayd, that these plagues before named, as warres, dearths and pestilences, come and light vpon those also which professe the Gospell, and that bee aduersaries to the Bishop of Rome: for they dwell together vpon the face of the earth. I answer, that God doth chastice his seruants for their offences, not in wrath and displeasure to their destruction, but in fatherly loue and mercie, for their good: as yee may see how Saint Paule teacheth, 1. Corinth. 11. toward the latter end of the chapter. The Lorde dooth correct and chastice his children, that they may not bee condemned with the world. And as hee sayth, all things worke together for good to them that loue God. Rom. 8. Let vs therefore in time of these calamities, humble our selues vnder the mightie hande of God, to giue glorie to his name, and not rage and blaspheme with the wicked.



The 35. Sermon.

CHAP. 16.

- 10 And the fift Angell poured out his viall vpon the throne of the beast, and his kingdom waxed darke, and they did gnaw their tongues for sorrow.
- 11 And blasphemed the God of heauen for their paines, and for their sores, and repented not of their workes.
- 12 And the sixt Angell poured forth his viall vpon the great riuer Euphrates, and the waters thereof dried up, that the way of the kings of the East might be prepared.
- 13 And I saw three vncleane spirits like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false Prophet.

- 14 For they are the spirites of deuils working miracles, to goe out to the kinges of the earth, and the whole worlde, to gather them to the battaile of that great day of God almightie.
- 15 Behold I come as a thiefe, blessed is hee that watcheth and keepeth his garments, least he walke naked, and men see his filthines.
- 16 And he gathered them into a place called in the hebrew tongue, Armageddon.
- 17 And the seventh Angell poured forth his viall into the ayre, & there came a great voice out of the temple of heauen, saying, it is done.
- 18 And there followed voices, thundrings, & lightnings, and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mightie an earthquake I meane.
- 19 And the great citie was deuided into three partes, and the cities of the Gentiles fell, and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to giue unto her the cup of the wine of the fiercenes of his wrath.
- 20 Euerie Isle fled, and the mountaines were not found.
- 21 And there fell a great haile as it had bene talents out of heauen vpon the men, and men blasphemed G O D because of the plague of the haile, for the plague thereof was exceeding great.



We haue had foure of the seven last plagues in the former part of this chapter, at the pouring forth of the vials of the foure angels, and now in the rest of the chapter wee haue the other three, the former whereof is the fift plague. And to come to that, he sayth, that the fift Angell poured forth his viall vpon the throne of the beast. The former plagues were very grievous, but not like vnto this, for this commeth neerer euen to the top, or to the head, and so spreadeth ouer the whole bodie. For in that wicked apostasie, the throne is euen the very top, and that being touched, all the whole societie which is subiect to the same, is also touched. Wee must therefore note that here commeth a plague that toucheth to the quicke, the effect whereof is expressed in these words, And his kingdome waxed darke. Wee haue seene before how high the throne of the beast was exalted, where hee sayth the dragon gaue him his power, his throne, and great authoritie: and all the worlde wondred and followed the beast, and worshipped the beast, chapter 13. And now at the pouring forth of the fift viall, here is shewed, not the quite ouerthrowe or vtter pulling downe at once, but the decay and diminishing of the same. For he sayth not that the kingdome of the beast is cast downe, when the fift Angell poureth forth his viall vpon his throne, but that it is darkened. The maiestie, the power, the dignitie, the pompe, and the estimation of Antichrists kingdome commeth now into decay, waxeth obscure, and is diminished. It may here bee demaunded, Is not the kingdome of the beast a kingdome of darkenesse? Yes verily, it is a kingdome of all darknes and confusion. How then can it be said to be darkened? can darknes

be

be darkened? or is the power of darkenes diminished by darkenes? To make this cleere, we must distinguish: for in respect of heauenly and spirituall light, the poperie is darkenes, and blind ignorance euen a gulfe of confusion. But in respect of this worlde, the throne and kingdome of that Romish beast did shine in wonderfull brightnes, in pompe, and glorie. Now the darkening is in respect of these latter, for their worldly power and glorie is obscured and waxeth darke. That throne was taken to be the chaire of Peter, and the pope was esteemed to bee his successor, and to haue Christs power here vpon earth euen as a God to doe what he lust. All men were glad to haue his blessing, trembling at his curse, and seeking remission and pardon of their sinnes at his hands. They did all magnifie and extoll him as the most holy father: Emperours and kings did worship him. But when the angell had poured forth the viall vpon that throne, when the time was come that the light of Gods worde should breake forth againe: his throne commeth in question, his authoritie commeth in question, and is found by the euident testimonies of the truth to be vsurped. Whereupon it followeth that all his lawes and decrees are not of God, but wicked and abominable. Whereupon further it is found that it is the kingdome of the great Antichrist, the man of sinne, the whore of Babel. So that great kings, princes, and multitudes of people, which honoured him before as God, hauing their eies lightened with the cleere brightnes of Gods word, haue now loathed and despised him, as the most horrible and filthie Monster in the world. This is the darkening of that kingdome, this is it that hee saith, their kingdome waxed darke. And how sore a plague this is vnto them, and how neerely it doth touch them, the words following do shew, when he sayth, that they did gnaw their tongues for sorrow. At the first when the Gospell began to peepe forth, they did despise it, as a thing which they could easily suppress, but within a short time they found, that neither by their excommunications, wherewith in former times they had euen as it were with lightning and thunder caused kings and nations to tremble, neither by force of warres, nor by bloudie slaughters, neither by any skill in learning, nor by trecheries, they could any thing preuaile, but that it did more and more lay open their filthines and shame. Then did they become, and so doe they continue at this day, euen as mad men in sorrowe and rage, which the holie Ghost expresth, in saying that they gnaw their tongues for sorrow. They bee full of fierie hatred, & cannot tell which way to be reuenged: for the more they strue, the more they loose daily. Faine would they haue the Poperie restored to the ancient glorie, and they deuise what they can to bring it about: but it will not bee, for their kingdome waxeth darker and darker. This is the griefe of all griefes vnto them.

He addeth, and they blasphemed the God of heauen, for their paines and for their sores, and repented not of their workes. Here againe the holy Ghost sheweth what effect the plagues which God sendeth doe worke in the reprobate. The more neerely men are touched and pressed with the hand of God, the more they should be humbled and become penitent, as wee noted before. But these are so farre from that, as that indeede they breake forth into open blasphemies against the

the

the Lord God of heauen : and turne not from their wicked workes. It is not possible for a man to reckon vp all the blasphemies which the Bishops of Rome with their Cardinals, their Bishops, Abbots, Monks, and Friars, haue vttered against the holy doctrine and worship of God, and especially since it hath made their kingdom to waxe darke, and their pompous glorie to come downe. And it is a thing to be wondred at to behold their impudencie in colouring and defending all the wicked abominations which haue beene and which are committed among them. They defend the superstition, the idolatries, the heresies, and foule errors which in former times their Church hath set vp. Also the wicked maners of their Votaries, and other most filthy deedes, they seeke to cloake : yea they adde treasons, perjuries, and murders. This is the repentance of the papists, now when the gospel hath bewrayed them. But let vs goe forward to the pouring forth of the sixth viall.

It is said, that the sixth Angell poured forth his viall vpon the great riuer Euphrates, and the waters thereof dried vp, &c. The kingdom of the beast waxed darke at the pouring forth of the fifth viall, but the sixth payeth them home neerer. For it drieth vp the waters of Euphrates, so that the way is laid open for those that shal spoile and destroy their citie, to enter into it, and to take it. Let vs giue care vnto this, for it is ioyfull vnto all Gods people, and it is euen now in working. The waters of Euphrates are dried vp by little and little, and do waxe euery day more shallow, to become such as men may wade ouer into Rome, euen to rouse Antichrist out of his pallace. But things are here spoken mytically, and must bee interpreted. Rome the citie of Antichrist, or the kingdom of the beast is called in this propheticke Babel. We all know the reason, euen because it hath held the people of God in bondage, for so did Babel in old time. Then look what y scripture teacheth concerning the destruction of that Babel, and yee shall finde that the holy Ghost vseth those speeches here to set forth the destruction of Rome, and of the kingdom of Antichrist. In Daniel, chapter 5. is set forth how Babel was taken by Darius, and Cyrus Kings of the East. For they were the kings of the Medes and Persians, which besieged Babel. This citie Babel was so strong that they could not preuaile. On the one side of it, and iust by it, did runne the riuer Euphrates, a riuer very broad and deepe, which was such a defence, that on that side there was no passing into the citie. Cyrus had this deuise, he caused the armie to cut out great trenches and ditches, and so to let out the riuer aboue before it came to the citie, and so drawing out the waters and deriuing them an other way, hee made the riuer so shallow before the citie, that the souldiers waded ouer, and entred. To this the holy ghost here alludeth. Then is it easie to see what is here meant when he sayth, the waters of the great riuer Euphrates were dried vp. For by this riuer is signified the fortification of Rome this great Babel. It was of late a great deepe riuer, and not to bee waded ouer. For when the world wondred after the beast, and said who is able to warre with the beast, how strongly was that kingdom, or that great citie fortified? The riches, the glory, the honour, and the strength thereof were exceeding great, these are Euphrates, and the waters of these are dried vp. The waters of this riuer are a great deale shallower then they were some fiftie yeares past, and doubt-

lesse

lesse they dry vp by little and little dayly. The Popes coffers waxe emptie, his credite is impaired very much, his friends haue forsaken him, his olde reuenues out of sundrie kingdomes doe faile : and so the passage beginneth to lie open to the kings of the East. Rome beginneth to lie open to her enemies, the waters of her Euphrates are become so shallow, that men may almost wade ouer them, and in proccesse of time they wilbe dried vp that men may easily passe ouer. They were so deepe that no kings could lead their armies ouer them : but the way shal bee made easie. But here it wil be demaunded, who are these kings of the East, and how shal the citie of Antichrist be taken? The things being yet to come, it is hard to tel how they shalbe, or by whom. Rome shal downe, that is most certaine : and whether by Christian princes, or by the Turkes, or other Easterne princes, we can not tell. If any shal say, that the text is plaine, that the way shal bee prepared for the kings of the East : I answer, that is but an allusion, because Darius, and Cyrus that tooke Babel, drying vp the waters of Euphrates, & leading ouer their armies, were kings of the East.

Well let vs goe forward, the waters drye vp and they perceiue it, and bestirre them exceedingly. For when men let out the waters of a great pond that is full of fishes, when the water waxeth low, ye shall see the fishes take on wonderfully : So is it with the Romish Antichristian rabblement ; they feeble the waters of their riuer drying vp, and they tumble and trosse euery way. For beholde what Saint Iohn addeth, I saw three vncleane spirites like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, & out of the mouth of the false prophet. Now y matter waxeth hot. And marke here who ioyne together, the dragon, the beast, and the false Prophet. The dragon is the deuill, the beast is the Romane Empire, the false Prophet is the papacie, who is also in one respect a chiefe head of the beast, and as he is the false prophet a beast by himselfe. These three are no meane ones, and they consent, and conspire together against the Gospel, to maintaine poperie, which is here represented by three spirites which come out of their mouthes, which are all alike, for they be all like frogs, they be all of one nature and qualitie, for he saith, They be the spirites of deuils working miracles, and they goe foorth all vpon one busines : for he saith, they go forth to the kings of the earth, to gather them to the battell of the great day of God almightie. Do yee not see how they all three agree together in one? The deuill is the chiefe, the beast and the false prophet are led by his spirite : for the spirites that come out of their mouthes are the same with that which cometh out of his. They haue all three one minde, one purpose, one desire, and practise one thing. What are these spirites then that are the spirites of deuils, like frogs, which goe forth to the kinges of the earth? Surely the Iesuities and Seminarie priestes, which are sent forth into all landes vnto kinges and princes to moue them against the Gospel, are most fitly resembled by these vncleane spirites. For first they come with the mind of the Pope, and of the Romane Empire, and so with the very mind and spirit of the dragon. They come with the very spirites of deuils, and with great efficacie of error do worke strange things, euen wonders to deceiue the blind. They be like frogs, not onely that their delight is in the

stinking

stinking puddles of filthy superstition, as frogs delight in marish places, but also that they keepe a croaking and make a tedious noyle. They seeke by trecheries, and all manner of lewd practises to moue seditions, and rebellions, and treasons, and all for the maintenance of the poperie. I will not here enter into any discourse of their particular doings, which haue been so famous here within our land, that euen children cannot be ignorant thereof. How many of them haue conspired the death of our prince, and haue their heads standing ouer London bridge? Let them croake and take on while they will in all lands, and gather as great armies as they can, yet the waters of Euphrates shall daily diminish and drie vp, and they doe but assemble and prepare themselves to the slaughter in the great day of God almighty. It is God that bringeth them downe, and no power of man can withstand him.

Then in the next place, because here was mention made of the great day, there is a warning added, for to stirre vs vp vnto watchfulnes to waite our Lords coming. Behold (sayth he) I come as a theefe. The Lorde will come suddenly, and when he is not looked for, as he teacheth by this comparison, Matth. 24. and Luke 12. That if the good man of the house did know at what houre the theefe would come, he would not sleepe but watch, and not suffer his house to be broken vp. A theefe cometh at vnwares vnto them that bee asleepe. For which cause our Saviour sayth here, behold I come as a theefe, I will come when men shall thinke least, and they shall bee caught as in a net. Wherefore they are blessed that doe watch, and keepe their garments, least they walke naked and men see their filthines. This watching is to be vnderstood of the minde, that it fall not asleepe in carnall pleasures, in cares of this world, or securely wallow in sinne, and so be spoyled of the precious garments of the soule, which are giuen vs in Christ Iesus. This admonition is giuen more then once in the scriptures, and reasons added to moue and to perswade, because the neerer the end of the world, the more worldly men will grow, and lesse watchfull in minde vnto good things. I doe therefore beseech ye to consider of it, and bee warned. Doe not followe the multitude of the world herein, which as men asleepe in sin walke naked, and their filthines is seene both to God & men. They wil not be warned: but (beloued) be ye warned at the voyce of the Lord himselfe, who is to be beleueed, and telleth what is for our good.

And now where it was sayd, that the vncleane spirits, which came out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, went forth vnto the kings of the earth to gather them together vnto battaile: it is shewed that they preuaile therein, I meane thus farre as to gather them to the battaile. These wicked ministers of Antichrist, guided and led with the spirit of Satan, although they cannot preuaile with all kings and princes, yet they stirre vp some, whom they perswade to bend their force against the cause of God, and against his faithfull seruants. For such Kings and Nobles as God dooth not by his speciall grace lighten to behold his truth, lye open to bee seduced by their sleights. They are so impudent in their false flanders, with which they burden the professors of the Gospell: they are so importunate in boasting of the au-

thoritie

thoritie of their Romish synagoge: they are so cunning to depraue and to peruert the holy Scriptures, that they much preuaile with some. It is sayd therefore that they gather the kings with their forces together into a place called in hebreue *Armageddon*. Here is a darke speech, but the meaning is this, that the Lord will destroy these enemies of his Church with so horrible slaughter, that the place shall take a name thereof. For so we may reade, that among the Hebrewes it was an vsual thing where any famous thing fell out, to call the place where it fell out, by a name that did report the same vnto posteritie. This is so vsuall a thing, as I sayd, that whosoever readeth the olde Testament shall finde it very often, so that in so cleere a matter I will not alleage any particulars. This is hard to bee expounded what the word *Armageddon* doth signifie: because S. Iohn wrote it not in hebrew letters but in the greeke, and somewhat also in forme of a greeke name. For there bee hebrew letters, which when a word is turned into another language, I meane expressed with the characters of another tongue, cannot fitly be expressed; and therefore are sundrie times left out. And this name *Armageddon* is compounded of two hebrew words, but with what letters in the hebrew it is hard to tell, or with what change also of vowels. Some say it cometh of *Har*, which signifieth a mountaine, and *Megiddo*, which is the name of the place where the godly king Iosias was slaine: and so this place should be called *Armageddon*, the mountaine of Megiddo, for the slaughter of kings that shall bee there. Others doe expound it to come of *Enem*, which signifieth a killing, a destruction, and *Gedud*, which signifieth an armie, and so together it should signifie the destruction of an armie. Some other doe take it to be expounded of *Arma* with the letter *Ain*, as to say *gnarma*, which is subtiltie, and *gada* with the letter *Ain* also, which signifieth to cut downe, as to say *gidnon*, and so the sense should be the subtiltie of cutting downe, because the kings and their armies are seduced by the subtiltie of Antichrist and of his ministers, to their vtter subuersion and cutting downe. All these come to one thing in effect, which is, that the armie of these wicked ones which assemble themselves in battaile against the Lord shall be destroyed: and therefore it is not much materiall to dispute which is the more likely signification of the word. This is our speciall comfort, that albeit the beast and the false prophet led by the spirit of the Dragon, doe make great sturres, and gather great armies and powers to fight against the Gospell, and against all that doe profess it, and that onely for the maintenance and supportation of their owne pompe and glorie, yet they shall not preuaile, but shall be vtterly cut downe and destroyed: as we shall see it more at large set forth in the 19. chapter.

Now to the last plague: The seventh Angell powred forth his viall into the ayre, and there came a great voyce out of the temple of heauen from the throne, saying, it is done. This plague containeth the most general and the most grieuous wrath and vengeance of almighty God, vpon the whole bodie of the kingdome of Antichrist. It containeth indeede sore iudgements vpon them immediately before the last day, with the wrath that shall then come vpon them: and therefore it is sayd to bee powred forth into the ayre: for that doth compass them all in on

euery side. And moreover, that wee may note the grieuoufnes of this vengeance, here is the voice of almightie God from his throne in heauen. Moreover, this voice is to teach vs, that God in his vchangeable decree hath determined to beate the downe, and that now the time is come, and he will endure them no longer. Hee hath touched them with former plagues, and that neerer and neerer, but no repentance hath followed, no amendment: but contrariwise they haue waxed worse and worse, and haue more wickedly blasphemed him and his holy truth, to maintaine their owne inuentions, and therefore now he beginneth to come vpon them with more horrible vengeance, euen to their vtter ouerthrow.

He sayth, It is done. Now they must come to their reward. There is no way for them now to escape: for can men escape from the hands of God? Although their plagues haue been great, yet they are so stone hard, that they seemed little to feele them. Nay, the Lord seemed to winke at them in some sort, and but to dallie with them: but now he will lay on downe blowes, euen to breake the stonie rockes in peeces. O beloued, let vs take heede that we haue nothing to doe with the popish sort, let vs flye and eschew their religion and their manners, least we come also to be partakers with them in the plagues which here doe follow. For first hee sayth, that there followed voyces, thundrings and lightnings, and that there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men dwelt vpon the earth, so mightie an earthquake. These speeches are not to bee taken according to the letter, but mystically: and they doe set forth that all shall bee full of horror and shakings. If there were so great a tempest in the ayre, with terrible thunderclaps, and flashes of lightning, and roring noyses, and withall the earth trembling and shaking vnder mens feete, would it not bee a most terrible thing to behold? Could any man endure and not quake for feare at the sight and hearing thereof? Would it not bee thought then, as we vse to say, that it seemeth heauen and earth would be mingled together? There shall come then (as is here figured by such a tempest) horrible thinges vpon the kingdomes which are subiect vnto Antichrist. Terrible iudgements of God shall light vpon them. They shall bee as it were beat downe with lightnings and thunders, and the earth shaking vnder them. Where shall they haue any comfort, or succour? There shall bee not onely terrible and dreadfull plagues vpon them, but also such shakings of their estate, such commotions and tumults, as the like were neuer since the beginning of the world. There haue been great shakings, great commotions, great broyles, great alterations and changes, but neuer any like vnto those which shall fall out when this tempest is begunne. Thus may we see the chiefe cause why the Angell is sayd to powre forth his viall into the ayre, because these horrible iudgements are represented by a terrible tempest, and earthquake. Now ye shall see what effect this tempest and earthquake doe cause, or what matters come to passe by the same. It is first sayd, that the great citie was deuided into three parts. The great citie in this prophetic is Rome, and the dominion of Rome, euen so farre as it extendeth. For looke how farre her authoritie stretcheth, so farre may it be called the great citie: and al that worship and serue the beast, may be sayd to bee citizens and to dwell in the great citie.

citie. Then as it falleth out in mightie tempests and great earthquakes that cities are torne and rent, so is it here sayd, that by this tempest and earthquake, the great citie is clouen into three parts. Many doe expound this thus, that the multitude in all nations, which with one consent did professe poperie, and worship the beast, shall be diuided from that vnitie into three parts. As namely, one part at the voyce of the Gospell forsake the Romish religion, euen with zeale and pure affection, to worship the true and liuing God, according to the rules of his holy word. Another part shall stiffely cleaue to the poperie, euen blinded and besotted in their errors. A third part not caring for the one side nor the other, but as men voyd of religion, shall stand as it were indifferent. Doubtles of this latter sort there be wonderfull many, which being men of this world, so they may inioy the world, the riches and delights thereof with peace, they care not much what religion come. They can goe through in poperie, and when they be among papists commend it: and they can make some shew of the Gospell among Gospellers. No man can denie but that this is most true: but yet I thinke wee cannot for certaintie affirme that it is here meant by the cleauing of the great citie into three parts. For mine owne part I thinke the time of the powring forth of this seuenh viall is not yet come: and therefore we cannot precisely say what it shall be. Sure we are, it shall be a very grienous calamity, and a grienous rent, but in what manner, we must not take vpon vs to set forth, seeing the fulfilling of prophecies is the cleere and perfect interpretation of them. It may be it shall be in Rome it selfe, and not to be vnderstood of the whole societie which is subiect to that Romane tyrannie: they that liue when it commeth, shall see it.

Then is it said further, And the cities of the Gentiles fell. This is vsually expounded of the kingdome of the Turke, and of other kingdomes of the Heathen which deny Christ: but I see no reason to force thereunto. Indeepe vsually in the holie Scriptures the Gentiles are taken for those nations, which in no sorte did professe the religion and worship of the true God: but yet they that marke shall finde that sometimes in the Psalmes and in the Prophets, the prophane multitude in the visible Church are called Heathen. And so in the 11. chapter of this booke the Romish multitude, partly Pagans vnder the cruell Emperours, and partly false Christians vnder the Popes, are called Gentiles or Heathen: and so this may be vnderstood of the cities of those prophane and wicked Idolaters which cleaue to the poperie, that they shall fall, I leaue it also as a thing as yet darke.

Then next he sayth, that great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to giue vnto her the cup of the wine of the fiercenes of his wrath. This whore of Babel did imagine while the Lord let her alone, that God did not regard her doings. And such is the weakenes of man, that euen the faithfull are readie to feare when the wicked are suffered to range, that God doth not remember them: and therefore when this time commeth, the Romish synagogue shall see and feele, that God remembreth her. And when she shall bee made to drinke of the cup of the fierce wrath of the Lord, all men shall acknowledge that she is not forgotten, and that although her abominations do escape for a time, yet shall they not escape

for euer. Then is there further added, that euery Ile fled, and the mountaines were not found: which sheweth that there shall be no place of refuge for these wicked men, whereunto they may flee for succour. For in time of great calamities men vse to flee to the mountaines to hide themselves, or into Isles. But in this tempest and earthquake when the terrible God standeth vp to execute vengeance vpon these vngodly enemies of his Gospell, there shall be no place for them wherein they may hide themselves from him, but his hand will find them out.

Then last of all he sayth, that there fell a great haile as it had beene talents out of heauen vpon the men, and me blasphemed God because of the plague of the haile, for the plague thereof was exceeding great. Wee read how the Lorde God cast downe great stones from heauen vpon the wicked, whome hee rooted out of the land of Canaan, when Iosua came and fought to place the tribes of Israell there: and so it is said, that vpon these wicked in Antichristes kingdome, hee will cast downe haile stones of great waight. Hee will fight from heauen against them to beate them downe vnto eternall destruction. But they will not relent, but still blaspheme him. And thus yee see what a tempest of wrath remaineth for the wicked Papists. Let vs therefore cheerefully and louingly imbrace the holy Gospell of God, that we may reioyce, when the enemies shall houle. For with this haile they shall bee beaten downe into hell, where shall bee weeping and gnashing of teeth world without end.



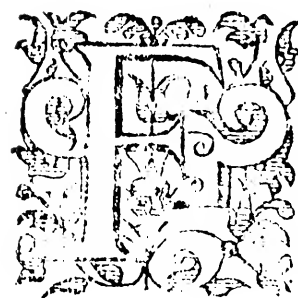
The 36. Sermon.

CHAP. 17.

- 1 Then there came one of the seven Angels, which had the seven vials and talked with me, saying vnto me: come I will shew thee the damnation of the great Whore that sitteth vpon many waters.
- 2 With whom haue committed fornication the kings of the earth, and the Inhabitants of the earth are drunken with the wine of her fornication.
- 3 So hee caried me away into the wildernes in the spirite, and I sawe a woman sit vpon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemie, which had seven heads and ten hornes.
- 4 And the woman which I saw was arraid in purple and crimson, and girded with gold, pretious stones, and pearles, hauing a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthines of her fornication.
- 5 And in her forehead was a name written a mystery, great Babylon the mother of whoredomes, and abominations of the earth.
- 6 And I sawe the woman drunken with the blood of the Saints, and with the blood

blond of the Martyrs of Iesus: and when I saw her I wondred with great meruaile.

And the Angell said vnto me, wherefore meruailest thou? I will shewe thee the mysterie of the woman, and of the beast that beareth her, that hath seven heads and ten hornes.



E haue had the description of the beast with seven heads which is the former dominion of Rome, and of the beast with two hornes which is the latter, euen the kingdome of the great Antichrist that should come. The plagues also which GOD would send vpon that idolatrous Synagogue haue beene set forth, and the ruine thereof. And now that the people of God might know for certaintie, and not by coniectures who should bee this beast, and where he shuld raigne: here is not onely a vision shewed vnto Saint Iohn of the beast, but also of the citie where he should raigne, and moreover the mysterie of them both expounded. The Lord sent his Angell vnto Iohn to open the meaning of these visions, so that we doe not rest vpon any vncertaine coniectures, but haue the exposition of God himselfe. Why should we any more complaine, and say the things be so darke that they cannot be vnderstood? or that we can haue no certaintie of them? what can we require more but the exposition of the Lord God himselfe? Here the Iesuistes vse what sleights they can to defend Rome, and their Pope, but they are so euidently noted, that they can not couer their shame but with such thin couerings as euery one may easily see through them. But now beloued, seeing the Lord doth so graciously by his holy Angell expound vnto vs the mysterie of the whore of Babell, and of the beast which beareth her, let vs thankfully and reuerently apply our minds to learne: and especially because the exposition of the mysterie of this woman, and of the beast that beareth her, is a cleere opening of the greatest part, and euen of all the chiefe matters in this prophecie. This chapter is euen as the key to open the closet of the mysteries of this booke. But let vs come to the words of the text.

Then (saith he) there came vnto me one of the seven Angels, which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying vnto me, come I will shew thee the damnation of the great whore which sitteth vpon many waters. Here is for this vision (as ye see) first set downe the minister by whom this vision is shewed and expounded vnto Iohn, that is the Angell. And hee was one of those seven which had the seven vials of the wrath of God, because here followeth not onely an exposition of the mysterie of the great whore, but also her damnation in the next chapter. For this Angell is one of them which poureth forth vpon her the wrath and iudgement of God.

Secondly, it is noted how he calleth Saint Iohn to the receiuing of this speciall vision. For he saith, come I will shew thee. And then is added what he will shew him, namely, the damnation of the whore. The words after some phrase may bee.

expounded thus, I will shew thee that damnable great whore which sitteth vpon many waters. For as yet Iohn had not seene her in any vision. And in that he sayth, She sitteth vpon many waters: it sheweth that she hath dominion ouer many nations and peoples, as we shall see afterward in this chapter: for the Angell doth so interpret them. In the next words there is a reason rendred, not onely why she is called a whore, but also the great whore. She is a whore, because she hath committed fornication: she is the great whore, because shee hath committed whoredome with such great ones, and with so many: for he sayth, with whom haue committed fornication the kings of the earth, & the inhabitants of the earth are drunke with the wine of her fornication. The Church of Rome boasteth her selfe to be the chaste spouse of Christ, but she reiecteth his lawes, she condemneth his pure worship, and setteth vp a worship of her owne, euen all idolatrie and superstition, the worship of deuils, and so like a most abominable filthy whore hath allured and drawn the kings of the earth, and their subiects euen mightie nations to commit spirituall whoredome with her: for so the scripture speaketh of all those that turne from the pure worship of God vnto mens inuentions. And here wee are to note that he saith, the inhabitants of the earth are made drunke with the wine of her fornication. For this in a worde expresseth with what greedie desire the blind idolatrous people shoulde receiue the decrees of the Bishop of Rome, euen as drunken men seeke stil to poure in wine. No man is able with words sufficiently to expresse how much and how madly men in the time of popery doted vpon the rotten filthy inuentions of the Pope. How did they drinke vp his pardons and indulgences euen as men drinke vp sweet wine? How raine they after strokes and stones at his appointment? and euen like men that are mad drunke, looked to saue their soules by swilling in the very dregs of his inuentions. It is rare to find any that haue the like true zeale to receiue into their soule the holy and pure oracles of God. Doubtlesse the drunken zeale of Papists to commit whoredome with this great whore of Babylon, in vehemencie goeth farre beyonde the zeale generallie of those that profess the holy Gospell. Which thing indeed ought to make vs much ashamed. For shall they be more zealous of mens inuentions, nay of the deuils inuentions which poyson the soule vnto death? then we shall be of the liuely words of God which bring grace and saluation. Let it somewhat stirre vs vp.

It followeth, So he caryed me away into the wilderness in the spirite. The Angell being to shew vnto Iohn the great whore of Babell, caryeth him away in the spirite. He is againe rauished in the spirite as sometimes the prophets were when visions were shewed vnto them. And he sayth, he is caryed into the wilderness, and there he hath the sight of her set before him. What meaneth this, that the great whore is in the wilderness? I will shew yee. The Lord in the Prophet Esay calleth the Gentiles the wilderness: for among them there was no fruitfulness to God, but all lay barren and waste. Therefore it is said, chapter 12. of this booke, when the Church was spread among the Gentiles, that shee was fled into the wilderness. By the same reason, the visible Church is called a wilderness, when it is once laide wast and desolate. And Saint Iohn Baptist commeth crying in the wilderness. The

great

great whore of Babell, is seated in the Church which is the vineyard of the Lorde, but she so wasteth and destroyeth so farre, that she turneth almost all into a wilderness, and therefore in the wilderness is she shewed vnto Iohn. No fruitfull thing can grow neere her, she maketh hauocke, and so right wel she appeareth in the wilderness.

Now after the place noted where hee saw her, Iohn commeth to paint her out and to describe her. And I saw (saith he) a woman sit vpon a scarlet coloured beast. The true Church in the 12. chapter of this booke, appeared in vision vnder the shape of a woman clothed and decked with heavenly and spirituall ornaments: And here the malignant Church, the Romish Synagogue, and the citie of Rome it selfe is figured and represented by a woman also in goodly decking, and in verie pompous and costly attyre, but not heavenly, but such as this worlde doth afford: for it is all but whorish, she hath no spirituall ornaments. This woman sitteth vpon a beast. It hath beene shewed you before in the 13. chapter, that a beast doth signifie a dominion, a rule, a monarchie. For so much the Angell doth shewe in Daniel. The Romish rout, the Synagogue of Antichrist, and the citie of Rome hath beene supported by a mightie Empire and dominion which they haue helde ouer the nations: Therefore the woman sitteth vpon a beast. And this beast is scarlet coloured: for it is a bloudie kingdome. Yea and the Popes and Cardinals in their greatest pompe are clothed in scarlet. This beast is full of names of blasphemie. For that citie, and that Church hath beene held vp by a most blasphemous government, and by most wicked lawes. There is nothing in it but blasphemie vpon blasphemie against the holy doctrine of Christ.

Then further he saith, this beast vpon which the woman sitteth, hath seuen heads and ten hornes. Whereby ye may see it is that same beast, euen that same Empire, which is described, chap. 13. What is meant by the heads, and by the hornes of this beast, the Angell afterward in this chapter doth shewe, which I will not touch vntill we come to that place. And now for the attyre of this woman, he saith, The woman which I saw was arraied in purple and crimson, and girded with golde, pretious stones, and pearles. In few wordes the holy Ghost doth here declare, that the citie of Rome, and the Romish Church should be most richly and pompously decked with all costly things. For by purple, crimson, gold, pretious stones, and pearles, are signified not onely the thinges so named, but also all other pretious things for pompe and ornament. Whores doe trim vp themselves, and this great whore is decked and trimmed aboue all other. The harlots doe decke themselves for to entice and allure louers, and so to draw them to commit fornication. So this whore of Babell shineth in all outward pompe and glorie in earthly thinges, euen to the intent that she may allure the nations to commit whoredome with her, euen the spirituall whoredome. Looke vpon the citie of Rome in time past, looke vpon the Popes and Cardinals, and other great prelates, yea looke vpon their whole religion, and you shall see nothing but pompe, glorie, & beautie in outward things: and by these they haue dazeled the eyes both of high and lowe, and haue drawn them into superstition and idolatrie. Beloued, here is a speciall thing to be noted,

which I will laye open vnto you: and iudge in your selues, whether it bee not most plaine and euident.

The enemies doe graunt first, that the true Church is described with her ornaments, chap. 12. And also they cannot denie, but that here is described the malignant Church. Then let the wise consider the descriptions of them both: the true Church hath her ornaments, and her decking altogether heauenly and spirituall. She is cloathed with the Sunne, the Moone is vnder her feete, and on her head a crowne of twelue starres. Here is all from Christ, here is all spirituall and heauenly bewtie. The false church, shee setteth forth her selfe, shee is very pompous to the outward eye, but all her decking and ornaments bee earthly. She is not cloathed with the sunne, shee is not adorned and bewtified with the righteousness of Christ: she hath not a crowne of twelue starres vpon her head, the doctrine of the Apostles is not her crowne, it doth not shine in her, she hath no spirituall riches: but she glistereth with golde, precious stones, and pearles, and in all costly ornaments of purple, scarlet, crimson, and of all manner of filkes. And now iudge whether our Church which doth professe the Gospell, or the popish church be likest to that woman, chap. 12. Yea, and iudge whether their Church or ours, be likest vnto this woman here described, sitting vpon the beast. Ye shall finde that the Churches which doe renounce the poperie, and professe the Gospell, make no shew in any outward pompe, but haue all their glory in the sonne of God. Their bewtie is spiritual, inuisible, and hid from the eyes of flesh and blood: the pure doctrine of our Lorde Iesus Christ doth shine among them: it is their crowne, their glorie and bewtie. They seeke not to drawe men to their religion, by the glittering shew of outward things: but by the heauenly treasures and rich graces which are giuen vnto vs in Christ Iesus. On the other side, the Church of Rome, which extolleth her owne righteousness, glorieth in her owne doctrine, and in her owne decrees, hauing no spirituall treasures for to lay open, for to drawe men by, vnto her religion, trimmeth vp her selfe and all her religion with outward pompe of riches, and precious attyres: all is in outward glorie, and in goodly shewes. There is gold, pearles, precious stones, and costly garments: and take away these, and you take away all: for there will remayne nothing that is worth the looking on. It falleth out sometime, that notorious harlots which trimme and decke themselves with costly apparel, and goodly ornaments, and haue paynted their faces, doe seeme very bewtiful, comely and amiable, which yet, those goodly garments taken of, and they put into meane apparell, and the painting of their faces gone, are as homely and as hard fauoured women, as a man shall lightly see. And this is the very case of the great whore of Babylon, the Romish Church. She hath trimmed her selfe with costly ornaments aboue all other whores in the world. Shee hath painted her face, and hath set forth her selfe in such worldly pompe, bewtie, glory and riches, as the like hath not been seene, and thereby hath won great kings and multitudes, to commit whoredome with her, both while she was heathen, and since shee hath been vnder the Popes: and take away her outward pompe,

pompe, and shee is the most euill fauoured and beggarly whore that may bee. She hath no true spiritual bewtie, she hath no true heauenly treasures to bestow vpon her children.

It is added further, that this woman sitting vpon the beast, hath a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations of her fornication. The Angell sayd before, that this great whore had made the inhabitants of the earth, drunken with the wine of her fornication: and now here in vision, is shewed the cup in which she hath offered the same wine. For he saith, she had in her hand a golden cup. It is not in vaine that the cup is mentioned, because it may be demaunded how men should be so easilie led to drinke vp such abominable filthie things? Surely the cup doth intice them. It is such a goodly fine cup, for it is a cup of golde: who would suspect, that such horrible and filthie abominations of spirituall whoredomes should come forth of such a fine precious cup? It is in deede a golden cup, and such as the wisest man may easilie be deceiued with all, that is led but with humane wisdom. And so yee will confesse when ye know what it is: for what is this cup which this gorgeous whore of Babel holdeth in her hand, of which the kings and nations doe drinke? What is it by which she broacheth all her filthie abominations? It is even this, the title of the Catholike Church, of Peters chayre, and Christes Vicar: for they boast that they bee the Catholike Church, Peters chayre they say is at Rome, and the Pope hee is the Vicar of Christ. Is not here thinke ye a golden cup, will any man be afraide to drinke of it? Now into this golden cup, hath this whore put all her swill: for looke whatsoeuer filthines in superstition, in idolatries and heresies, the Romish Church hath deuised, they haue put the same into this cup, and so offered it to the kings and nations to drinke, and the cup hath made them drinke, making no question what they did drinke: for be it neuer so contrarie to the holy word of God, if it were once put into this golden cup, that is to saye, the holy Catholike Church hath decreed Christes Vicar sitting in Peters chayre doth commaund, who almost would refuse to suppe it vp? All lyes, doctrines of diuels, euen filthie abominations being put into this golden cup, the world was so greedie of them, that well was he which might get the first draught: and they did swill themselves, euen vntill they were drunken. Here lay the chiefe deccite: for if the filthie whore had not craftily made her such a cup, she could neuer haue entised the kings and nations to committe such abominable whoredome with her. Could shee haue made them drinke vp heresies and errors condemned by the expresse written word of God? Could she haue brought them contrarie to his flat commaundement, to worship Idols of golde and siluer, of brasle, of wood and stone? Could she haue brought them not onely to worship the dragon, but also to condemne, to persecute and most cruelly to murder the holy and pure worshippers of the Lord? but that she had vsurped and chalenged this title of Catholike Church, and of the power of Christ, and the blind world did beleue her. They tooke it, that nothing could come forth of this cup, but that which was for the saluation of their soules. Wee are here taught a good lesson to bee

wife, euen to looke what is put into the cup before we drinke of it for else out of a goodly cup of gold, we may drinke deadly poyson. So many in times past as by the wisdom of gods holy spirit, and by the light of his pure word did examine and trie the things which were put into this cup refused to drinke therof, and saued their soules, though to their trouble in this world: thus much touching the cup.

Then it followeth, and in her forehead was a name written, a myserie: Great Babylon, the mother of whoredomes and abominations of the earth. Shee hath her name and her qualities written in her forehead, to be openly seene and read of all men. Wee vse to say if euerie mans faults were written in their foreheads, some would pull down their hats very low: but this whore hath a name expressing her qualities, and all her abominable whoredoms written in her forehead, and yet is so impudent that shee is not ashamed at all. Shee hath the whores forehead indeed: this is the great goodnes of God, that this whore hath her name written in her forehead, to the end that all his chosen seruants might eschew her, and take heed of her whoredoms. The name which is written in her forehead, is great Babylon, and then her qualities are noted thus, the mother of whoredoms and abominations of the earth. Babel is confusion, Babel held the Church in captiuitie, Babel was full of idolatry. Rome is the great Babel, shee hath mixed & confused all in gods worship: shee hath oppressed the Church: shee hath abounded in all abominable Idolatries: Shee hath not only committed all manner of whoredoms and abominations and filthines, but euen as a mother of all these things, shee hath bred them, brought them forth, and spread them ouer the kingdoms and nations of the earth. Shee is the mother indeed of all filthines: for so is great Babylon. But it will be said, if her name be so openly grauen in her forehead, and her filthy whoredoms so manifestly expressed, how cometh it to passe that so many haue bene led away, and seduced by her to commit fornication? Did they read the name, & yet embrace hir? The holy Ghost answereth this in a word, that though her name & her qualities were written in her forehead, yet the world did not, nor could not reade it, for he sayth it is a myserie. The whore braggeth, that shee is the chaste and pure spouse of Christ: her whoredoms and abominations are so euident that they be euen written in her forehead, and the Lord hath set a brand vpon her forehead with this name, great Babylon the mother of whoredoms, &c. But yet it is a myserie, it is hidden from the blind world, and none of that Romish sort can read it: but Gods true & faithfull seruants by the pure light of his truth, as it were putting spectacles, do behold most clearly the letters of this name in the whores forehead. Oh say some, if Rome be Babylon, if the church of Rome be the synagogue of Antichrist, which carrieth her name written in her forehead, why should not so many learned men of that side espie so much? Yee see here that her name is written in a myserie, which the papists can not perceiue, being blinded and besotted with the loue of the whore: for this place sheweth euidently what an exceeding blindnes the popish sort are taken and held withall, that a name being written euen in the forehead, and that in cleare letters, yet can not they read it. This it is, when men despise the light of gods word, and will fol-

lowe

lowe their own inuentions: they blind themselues and are worthily blinded. But let vs embrace the heavenly light of gods word, & we shall see the letters as plaine in the whores forehead as may be, that shee is great Babylon the mother of whoredoms and abominations of the earth: for it is the light of gods word which maketh vs able to see & to vnderstand myseries. And thus shall we escape from the deceits of the cup of this abominable harlot, and stand vpright in the feare and true worship of God. And if any do not see that the Romish Church is great Babel, it is because they be blind, or vnskilfull in the myseries of God. Giue a faile printed booke to a man that can not reade, which knoweth not a letter, and what is it to him? Euen so to such as haue not the light of gods word, what is it that the name great Babylon is written in the forehead of the Romish Church? they can not read it: they can not perceiue it: they may easily be made beleue that it is a right holy Church. Well, we may see then that such as bee seduced by the whore of Babylon, it is through their own fault, they despise the true light, and so can not read the name that is written in her forehead. Again we may note here the folly of the papists, for they would beare men in hand because the name is great Babylon, that Antichrist should be one man, who should be borne at Babylon in Chaldea.

Moreouer, the cauill of the Rhemists is friuolous, when they haue confessed that Rome was called Babylon in the time that the Heathen persecuting Emperours did raigne there: when yet there was a glorious Church there which was not Babylon. And so doe inferre that if Rome bee the seate of Antichrist, yet the Pope and his Church are not Antichrist. As though it were not euident, that the Empire of Rome, that is, the beast which beareth her vp, should haue heads succeeding each other to support her as Babel euen to her ende, and that the seventh head was onely remaining to come when Iohn receiued this prophetic. Haue not the Popes borne her vp euen as the Emperours did? And let them shew what other head there shall be of the beast. Saint Iohn doth describe this whore yet further, saying, I saw the woman drunken with the bloud of the Saints, and with the bloud of the Martyrs of Iesus. This part of the description is to shew that this great Babylon is the cruell murderer of all the Martyrs in the time of the Gospell. It is the bloudie citie, yea so bloudie, that shee is euen drunken with the bloud of the Martyrs. This is a cleere marke to shew vnto vs the citie which is called in a myserie great Babylon, the mother of whoredomes and abominations of the earth. For let the Papists shew vnto vs any other citie besides Rome, which in the time of the Gospell hath shed the bloud of the martyrs. If any will reply and say, their bloud hath been shed in all lands, and in cities very farre distant from Rome. I answer, that that is very true, but yet it was onely Rome that put them to death. For in old time, when the first persecutions were, and many thousands were cruelly murdered in all lands, were they not put to death by the authoritie of Rome? Did not the Emperours of Rome commaund it? and was not the thing executed in their name and authoritie? Who can say that Rome was not then the sheader of the bloud of the Martyrs? And now of later times, all that haue been slaine for the

testimonie

testimonie of the Gospel, in France, in Spayne, in England, and in other countries, who hath put them to death but Rome? At whose decree haue they been slaine, and by whose authoritie, but of the Popes of Rome? Rome, Rome, hath put them to death. Rome is guiltie of their blood: yea Rome the great whore is euen drunken with the blood of the martyrs of Iesus. Haue you read or heard of any other besides Rome? Hath there been any other power since the Heathen Emperours, that hath there borne sway and persecuted besides the power of the Popes, or shall we looke for any other to come? If not, why should wee bee in any doubt to say Rome is great Babell that bloudie citie, and the persecuting popish Church of Rome is the wicked synagogue of Antichrist? Well, Saint Iohn was in great admiration, and wonderment when he beheld this woman. He saw her sit vpon such a monster with seuen heads and tenne hornes, he saw her so richly arraied and decked with precious costly ornaments, he saw such a goodly cuppe in her hand, filled with filthie whoredomes and abominations, he saw her name in her forehead, and her qualities painted out, and especially that she was drunken with the blood of the martyrs, and wondred with great admiration. For is it not a straunge and a wonderfull thing, that such a fine and daintie harlot should so drinke vp the blood of men, that she should become euen drunken with the same? It is a monstrous thing, and most sauage, so to gorge in blood. And let vs obserue how it falleth out with the murderers of the true seruants of God: euen as it is with drunkards, the more they drinke, the more they couet still to powre in more. The more they shed blood, the more greedily they desire still, and as drunken therewith they doe become insatiable. This is the righteous iudgement of God vpon them. Let it admonish vs for to take heede, how wee make any beginning to warie against the people of God, for hauing begun there is very great danger.

The Angell asketh Iohn why he marueileth? Not that the sight was not to bee wondred at, or that he simply reprehendeth his wondring: but he would not haue him stay as it were astonished, or amazed with admiration, but rather attend and couet to vnderstand the meaning. For that is mans frailtie to wonder so much as to be hindred, and therefore the Angell calleth him from his wonderment, saying, I will shewe thee the mysterie of the woman, and of the beast that beareth her which hath seuen heads, and tenne hornes. Here is a goodly thing, that wee may not follow vncertaine coniectures, but haue a full and an vndoubted interpretation of the mysteries of this booke, the Angell expoundeth them. For the exposition that the Angell here giueth, is euen as a key to open the closet into all the chief things in this booke. For if we vnderstand what is meant by this beast, by his heads and hornes, and likewise what the woman is, wee shall vnderstand the chiefe and almost all the whole argument of this booke. Shall we then set light by this exposition, when the Lord hath sent his Angell to giue it? Nay, let vs with all thankfulness and reuerence giue eare vnto it, and receiue the fruite thereof, that we may vnderstand this propheticke, and not bee seduced by Antichrist. Thus much for this time.

The



The 37. Sermon.

CHAP. 17.

- 8 *The beast which thou hast seene, was, and is not, and shall ascende out of the bottomles pit, and shall goe into destruction: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names are not written in the booke of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.*
- 9 *Here is the mind that hath wisdom, the seuen heads are seuen mountaines whereon the woman sitteth.*
- 10 *They are also seuen kings: five are fallen, one is, and another is not yet come, and when he cometh he must tarry a little space.*
- 11 *And the beast that was, and is not, is euen the eight, and is one of the seuen, and shall goe into destruction.*
- 12 *And the tenne hornes which thou hast seene, are tenne Kings, which as yet haue not receiued a kingdome, but shall receiue power, as Kings at one houre with the beast.*
- 13 *These haue one minde, and shall giue their power and strength to the beast.*
- 14 *These shall fight with the Lambe, and the Lambe shall overcome them, because he is Lorde of lords, and King of kings, and they that are with him, called, and chosen, and faithfull.*
- 15 *And he sayd vnto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.*
- 16 *And the tenne hornes which thou sawest in the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eate her flesh, and shall burne her with fire.*
- 17 *For God hath put into their hearts to doe his will, and to doe with one consent, to giue their kingdome to the beast, untill the words of God be fulfilled.*
- 18 *And the woman which thou hast seene, is the great citie, which hath the kingdome ouer the kings of the earth.*



Ow we come to the exposition: where the Angel doth not tel what the beast signifieth: and yet men may thinke, that that should be the first thing in the exposition. And doubtles so it should, but that the Angell dooth not expound that which the Scripture before had cleerely expounded. For by beasts, the Angell telleth the Prophet Daniel, are signified kings: but yet not the persons of kings, but the tyrannous power exercised by them by succession.

succession. Wherefore we must here consider that this beast is not to be taken for certaine persons, but for a dominion exercised by those persons, which haue therein succeeded each other, knowing then what is meant by a beast, which the Angel doth here omitte, because it is in Daniel cleerely expounded, we may the better vnderstand that interpretation which followeth. The beast saith he, which thou hast seene, was and is not, and shall ascend out of the bottomles pit. This may seeme a very strange and hard speech, to say the beast was and is not, and should ascend againe out of the bottomles pit. Had the beast bene in the world before the time that S. Iohn receiued this reuelation? was hee then gone out of the world, and should he afterward returne againe? Yea verily, let not that seeme strange: for the tyrannous power of Rome had bene very great before Iohns time, it was deminished in his time, and afterward should rise vp againe to the former maiestie. Before that Rome was gouerned by Emperors, and also in the dayes, and vnder the raigne of her first Emperors, Iulius, Augustus, Tiberius, and Claudius, the maiestie and power of that Monarchie was exceeding great. In the dayes of these Emperors Nero, Galba, Otho, Vitellius, and Domitian, that former maiestie and power was greatly deminished: And the same was raysed vp againe by the popes.

But it wil be objected, that although the maiestie and power of the Romane Monarchie was not so great when Iohn receiued this reuelation, as it had been in former times, yet it could not be sayd, not to be, but the Angel saith, the beast which thou hast seene was and is not. I answer, that the Angel himselte taketh away this doubt, for that we might know it is not to be taken absolutely, that he saith the beast is not, but for some respect, and in comparison he addeth that the beast is not, and yet is. How shall we expound these words, the beast was and is not, and yet is, but that he is, but not such as he had bene, nor such as he should be? Then we see there is no difficultie in these words, so we take the altogether. It may also be demaunded, seeing the powers are of God, how this Empire may be sayd to ascend out of the bottomles pit? The bottomles pit is hell, that which cometh from hell cometh from the diuell? I answer, that a beast doeth not represent simplic the power of gouernment, which in deed is the ordinance of God, but the ysurpation, the crueltie, and the tyrannous abuse of the power, against the trueth and against the Church of God: and so wicked tyrannie of the heathen Emperors and the papall power ascendeth out of hell euen from the very deuill. They bragge and boast in the papacie that they haue it from Peter, and he had it from Christ, and say that they be cast away that will not obey it: and the very trueth is, it is of the deuill, and they fall from God, which submitte themselves vnto it, and verily the Angel saith it shall goe to destruction, for as that which is of God doeth not perish, so all that is of the deuill must needes go to destruction. Whē this beast ascendeth againe out of the bottomles pit, he shall carrie such a maiestie, that the inhabitants of the earth shall wonder. Surely neuer any power in the world was so much wondered at as the ysurped power and maiestie of the Pope. They supposed that he had

power

power euen as a God vpon the earth, and that he might send to heauen, and cast downe into hell whom he would. He might depose kings and Emperors, and set vp also euen at his pleasure. Oh how did the world wonder and tremble at this power? but yet the Angel restraineth it to the reprobate, for none wonder at the beast but such, whose names are not written in the booke of life. The faithfull in all ages cried out vpon the blasphemous vsurped power of popes, and did not wonder at it. The Angel addeth, here is the minde that hath wisdom: which is a preface to moue attention, when men shall vnderstand that it is sound wisdom, yea it is such wisdom as God himselte commendeth, for a man to vnderstand the interpretation of the beast, and of the woman: for hee that vnderstandeth wil not be seduced by the poperie, but wil abide firme in the true worship of God. There hath alwayes bene much subtiltie vsed to drawe men to the Romish religion, but the minde which hath wisdom, that is to say, that mind which God doth instruct, and vnto which he giueth vnderstanding, doth vnderstand the interpretation which the Angel here maketh, and knoweth that the romish church is the whore of Babylō, euen a most filthie & idolatrous synagogue. Wel the Angel saith that the seuen heads of the beast are seuen mountaines vpon which the woman sitteth, and they be also seuen kings. Then it is euident that two things are signified by the heades: for seuen mountaines, are one thing, and seuen kings are an other. The papists here vsing all their cunning to defend Rome, do cauil and say, that the seuen hilles are seuen kings. If it had bene sette downe thus, the seuen heads are seuen mountaines, that is seuen kings, it had made for them that hilles and kings here were all one. But when he sayth that the seuen heads of the beast are seuen kings, and that they be also seuen mountaines, who seeth not that here are two seuerall things represented? They doe also cauil that the number seuen is put indefinitely and not for iust so many, as sundry times in this booke. But let them be asked how many are fise, and one, and one, are they not iust seuen? Fise sayth the Angel are fallen, one is, and one is to come, are not these iust seuen? Is not this to tell vs that we must take it of iust seuen? wel then to the matter, the Angel telleth Iohn that the woman which sitteth vpon the beast is the great citie, &c. Thē he speaketh of a citie here which for her situation is builded vpon seuen mountaines, and for her power and regiment hath bene supported by seuen seuerall kindes of gouernmentes which are called kings. Rome was builded vpon seuen mountaines: all the papists in the world cannot denie it: for not onely the poets of old time speake so of it, but also the seuen mountaines on which the citie is built are thus named, Capitulinus, Palatinus, Auentinus, Celius, Exquilinus, Viminalis, and Quirinalis. Let vs see if any papist in the world can denie but that Rome was builded vpon these seuen hilles, not one more nor lesse. Indeepe they heere seeke a litle poore shift, and say that Rome in olde time did stande vpon these seuen hilles. How faintly and howe coldely is this vttered? Faine they would say that Rome now standeth not vpon those seuen hils, because it now standeth in the plaine of Campus Martius, & the pope sitteth on the other side of the riuer: but they dare not for feare it should be sayd, if your pope sitte

not

not in that Rome where ye say Peter sate and had his chaire, then doeth not your pope sit in Peters chaire. For if Peter were Bishop of Rome, hee had his chaire and was Bishop of that Rome, which was builded vpon seuen mountaines. So that if they wil deriue their power from Peters chaire, it must be from that same Rome built vpon seuen mountaines, in which, if S. Peter were bishop of Rome, he had his chaire, and not from another Rome. Let them looke to it. But what though the citie be remooued, and the pope remooued also into another part, is it not still a citie builded vpon seuen hilles, when as the buildings vpon those seuen hils doe still partly remaine inhabited, and the popish religion there practised? Doth the building in the plaine, make it not to be vpon the seuen mountaines? Let the papists deny if they can, that there bee either churches or monasteries or both vpon euery one of those seuen mountaines. Let it be that for the inhabitants the prime as it were of that citie is remooued from those mountaines, yet let vs see how they can shift it, that those churches and monasteries, be not in Rome and of Rome. Then that he sayth, the seuen heades are also seuen kings, it sheweth that the citie Rome that gorgious whore, which is drunken with the blood of the saintes, hath bene borne vp not onely by seuen hilles vpon which she was built, but also by seuen kinds of gouernment, which he calleth seuen kings. He saith that five of these were fallen, before the time that Iohn receiued this reuelation, one was then present which was the sixe, and one, that is the seuenth, was to come. It will peraduenture be objected, that the Angell dooth not say, the seuen heades are seuen orders or states of kingly gouernment, but seuen Kings. It seemeth to note, out seuen men which raigned as Kings in Rome, and not seuen kindes of gouernment, in which there was the kingly power in euery one. I suppose this hath led some to expound it of seuen of the Emperors, five past before the time that the Angel spake this to Iohn, the sixt then present, and the seuenth to come. But what reason is there to leaue out the other wicked Emperors? Because they were not Romanes? They were Emperors of the same citie, and as wicked as the other. What then, shal we not thinke that the Angell speaketh here, as the Angell speaketh in Daniel? The foure great beastes (saith the Angell to Daniel) are foure Kings which shall rise vp in the earth, Daniel, 7, yet 4, 17. Is it not as cleere as the sunne, that by foure Kings are meant there, not foure men which raigned as Kings, but foure kingdoms or monarchies, in which many men succeeded each other, and raigned as Kings? The whole Empire then or Monarchie of the Babylonians is called a King, which stood long, and had many Kings by succession. The like is to be said of the Kingdome of the Medes and Persians, and also of the rest. Why then shall we not take seuen Kings here to be seuen kingly gouernments, by which the woman had been borne vp? Rome was not only builded vpon seuen hils, but also hath been vpholden by seuen seuerall orders of kingly power. For Rome was builded by Romulus and Remus: and Romulus raigned King. After him succeeded other Kings of Rome, of which Tarquinius Superbus was the last. The Angel saith five of the heades were fallen, of which five, this was the first that fell in the said Tarquinius: for there the Kings ended. Then next were

Consuls

Consuls chosen, and they gouerned the citie with kingly power: there is the second head. Afterward the Decemviri bare the chiefe sway, and so haue ye the third head. Then followed the gouernment of Dictators, as the fourth head: and then was there a fift state which were the Triumviri. And these five heades were fallen before our Saviour was borne. For none of these then bare the chiefe rule in Rome: but the sixt head, which was of Emperors was then vp, when the Angell talked with Iohn, which head begun in Iulius Cesar, for he was the first Emperor. This sixt head is it of which the Angell saith, one is: and one is to come. This one to come is the seuenth and the last, yea euen the last state by which Rome shall be supported in her magnificall pompe and delicacie. And this head is the papacie, this hath succeeded the Empire, & this is euen the greatest head of all. For vnder the Popes hath Rome been in her highest exaltaion and glorie. And now as this last head commeth downe, downe also she whore commeth. For the strength of the beast that beareth her vp, decaying and fayling, she cannot but faile and lye on the dust. The Angel saith, that this seuenth head when he commeth, must tarrie a little while. But will some man say, doth not this shew that it is not to be taken of the dominion of the Popes, for they haue raigned a long time. I answered that if we consider of time according to man, seuen or eyght hundreth yeares is a great time: but if we esteeme thereof according to the scriptures, a thousand yeares is but a small time, for what is it if it be compared with eternitie? It is now well spent, and the beast that beareth vp the whore will faile vnder her, and she shall come downe with her golden cuppe. The Angel addeth yet further, saying, the beast that was and is not, is euen the eight, and is one of the seuen, and shall goe into destruction. These wordes be very mysticall, that he sayth, the beast was and is not, applying it to the last head, that is, to the Antichristian power which was not yet come. For how can it be sayd that it was before, when as yet it was not come? For the tyranny of popes had not bene in the worlde. Surely considering all things here together which the Angel speaketh, especially that he sayth he is the eight and yet one of the seuen: For hereby it is most euident, and without all contradiction, that he speaketh of two powers, the ciuil, and spiritual: for in respect of the ciuil power he can be but the seuenth head. And therefore that he is also sayd to be both one of the seuen, and the eight, it must needes followe, that as for ciuill kingly power one of the seuen, so for the highest spiritual iurisdiction which he would vsurp he should be the eight.

Then marke what I say, the greatest power of the beast should be in the spiritual iurisdiction. He is said before to haue two hornes like the lambe: and this is that which he hath most preuailed withall of the two. And in respect of this horne S. Iohn saith, the beast that was and is not. For the ciuill tyrannie of Rome was when the Angell spake these things vnto Iohn, but the ecclesiasticall tyrannie was not as yet come, I meane in such a kind and manner as the Popes had. O this ecclesiasticall tyrannie over the faith and consciences of men is such, that Saint Iohn giueth the name of the whole beast vnto it. For doubtlesse in respect of the terrene gouernment

uornment; it could not well be said, the beast which was and is not, but in respect that at that time when the Angell spake this, there was not (as I said) the like spirituall tyrannie which afterward the deuill of hel aduanced the Popes vnto, although the Emperours tooke vpon them touching religion. It will be here objected, how can it be so taken, when he sayth, the beast was and is not, and should afterward ascend. For in that he sayth he was, it sheweth cleerely that the tyrannie he speaketh of, had beene exercised in the world before the time of Iohn: But who will say that the spirituall iurisdiction of the Popes had beene before the dayes of Iohn? Is it not out of controuersie that it was raised long after? This then seemeth flatly to overthrow that former exposition, seeing that the beast which the Angell saith to Iohn; is not, yet was, that is, had beene in the world before that time. I answer, that albeit the spirituall tyrannie of the Popes was not then, nor yet had beene exercised by any popes before this time that he receiued this reuelation, yet it had beene practised in the worlde in some measure before. For the wicked Priestes in Israell, the Scribes, and the Pharisees, had long time exercised a spirituall tyrannie against the people of God, against the Prophets, and against the sonne of God himselfe. The Church had now escaped from them, and so this beast was downe: but the Popes were to raise it vp againe, and to exercise it more cruelly then the priests and Pharisees had done. Thus we see why the Angell saith, the beast that was and is not, is euen the eight, and is one of the seuen, and shall goe into destruction. Onely it remaineth to know how one and the selfe same, should be both the eight, and one of the seuen.

This is very easie, if ye consider the two powers which the papacie hath challenged, and both of them the highest, that is, the kingly torrene power ouer all men both high and lowe, euen ouer Emperours and kings: and the Lordship ouer the faith and conscience of men. Both these in the Pope doe concur, and doe make but one beast. And in respect of the ciuill kingly power hee is the seuenth head of the beast which beareth vp the woman: for hee is the seuenth order of kinges by which Rome hath beene gouerned. Now if we respect the spirituall tyranny, which in old time the wicked priests and Pharisees had exercised, though not in such full power, which tyrannie now was downe, Ierusalem being destroyed before Iohn receiued this Prophecie, and therefore the Angel saith, the beast that was and is not: and if we regard this, how the Popes did againe raise vp the same, and practise it in more execrable manner then the other, yee may easily perceiue why this beast is both the eight, and one of the seuen. This is the reason why in the 13. chapter also, the papacie is described as a beast by it selfe with the two hornes; and yet is one of the seuen heads of that other beast. There are two beasts, hee is one of them himselfe, and by himselfe, and yet he is the seuenth head of the other. Here are seuen heads, he is one of the seuen, and yet the eight, as the Angell sayth, so wee see how fitly these things concur.

Now he commeth to the hornes. And the tenne hornes sayth he, which thou hast scene are tenne kings. Wee know that hornes in the scripture doe represent strength and might: and so here for their might and power, ten kings are figured by

by the ten hornes of the beast. For kings are mightie. Then behold what a mighty beast is this Roman Monarchie, which hath the power of ten kings and kingdoms, euen as hornes to strike or to push withall? In the seuen heads of the beast, wee see that it must needs be taken for iust seuen, because the Angell sayth, five are fallen, one is, and one is to come. Now for the tenne hornes, whether we shall take them for iust tenne, or for more, there is the question there remaineth the doubt. For if we number the kings and kingdoms, which were subiect to the Pope wee finde them more then tenne. But yet some (who I suppose not led thereto by this place but simply considering the matter) haue described the kingdoms of the earth, and make iust ten of those which were subiect to the Pope of Rome. Whether it bee so or not, this is euident, that there were tenne kingdoms which deserved to be accounted as hornes, for their power and strength which they gaue to the Church of Rome. These are the kings of the West, the kings of Europe. But the Angel said to Iohn, that they had not as yet receiued a kingdom, but should receiue power as kings at one hower with the beast. This is somewhat hard to be vnderstood. For had not these kingdoms kings ouer them, at that time when the Angell spake this to Iohn? They were almost all of them vnder the Emperour of Rome at that time. And they were subiect in such sort that they had not a kingdom. Now when the speciall beast grew vp, euen the second beast, that is, the papacie, together with him, they receiued power as kings. For doubtlesse there was a great alteration in the kingdoms vnder the popes, from that which they had beene vnder the Emperours. They receiue greater power, and they carrie an other minde toward the papacie then the nations before did toward the Empire. The Empire held them vnder by force and might, and set rulers as ouer prouinces, and against their liking they in the kingdoms obey: but to the papacie they submit themselves for conscience and of loue, euen as to the holy Church. The false prophet hath seduced them, and with him they receiue power as kings, he aduanceth them, for now their power maketh for him, they be his owne hornes. For marke what the Angel saith. These haue one mind, and shall giue their power and strength to the beast. These kinges had all one minde in time of poperie: For being seduced, they all helde the Pope to be Christs vicar, and that he might carrie to heauen, and throw downe to hell. They tooke it, that looke whatsoeuer the Church of Rome decreed, it must be obeyed vnder paine of damnation. And being all of this minde, they giue their power and strength to the beast. They doe all that they can to vphold him: and so they become his hornes: and he calleth them his sonnes: and whilest they raigne, he sayth he raigneth. Look what he willet they are readie: and therefore the angell addeth, these shall fight with the lambe. The dragon is against Christ, the Romish beast the papacie is set vp by the dragon, and hee vnder the name of Christ, seduceth the kinges to fight against the holy Gospell, and against the Church of Christ, in the defence of idolatrie and popish superstition. Beloued, did not the kinges thus fight against the lambe? But the lambe ouercometh them, for hee is alone all, he is king of kinges. And those that bee on his side, euen his faithfull seruants, his true worshippers, get the victorie also. For albeit the beast condemned them

them as heretiks, and then the kings put them to death, yet they gate the victorie, for they could not cause them to forsake the holy faith, nor to drinke of the whores cup. Here bee chosen, here bee called, here be faithfull ones. These conquer and triumph when they seeme to the worlde to bee ouercome, because their blood is shed. The lambe hath ouercome, his trueth doth stand and flourish, his Church doth increase, when the Romish monster with histenne hornes hath done all that he can. Beloued, when worldly powers are bent against the trueth, let vs not forsake it, for it shall get the victorie: assure your selues Christ will preuaile over them all.

It followeth, and he said vnto me, the waters which thou sawest where the whore sitteth, are people and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. Saint Iohn in vision sawe the whore sit vpon many waters, as he hath set it down. And the Angel expoundeth what these waters do signifie: euen multitudes of people of diuers nations & tongues. Then it is as much as to say, that the whore shall raigne ouer great nations and peoples: her dominion shall be very large. This is to meet with the proud braggies of the papists, when they vaunt themselves of their multitudes, vniuersalitie and consent. They deride and scorne the true professors of the gospel, because they haue beene so fewe, and chalenge to themselves the title of the vniuersall and catholike church, because they haue so great multitudes. You (say they) you can shew but here & there a fewe in all ages for this seven or eyght hundred years, which haue taught and beleued as you do: but wee haue had the consent and agreement of whole kingdoms and nations & tongues, which with one consent haue professed the religion of the church of Rome. Is it like that your few, or our multitude, is the true church? We answered, that if kingdoms, nations, multitudes, tongues and people be an argument to prooue a true church, because they all agree in one religion, then the whore of Babylon is the true church, for she sitteth vpon many waters, which the Angel saith are people, and nations, and kindreds, and tongues. Shall we acknowledge her to be the true church, because she hath with her golden cup, seduced so many great nations to drinke the wine of her fornication, and to commit most abominable whoredome and filthines with her? Doeth a multitude conspiring against the trueth, euen to set vp and to maintaine mans deuises against the written word of God, make that they do well, and that the trueth is to be condemned because fewe do followe it? I thinke any man may see the vanitie of this argument of the papists, and how it maketh flatly against them, because the maligne church is described to be so great: and yet it is one of their principal reasons to drawe the blind sort withall: for they vse it thus, as it like that God would suffer so many nations, & that for so long a time to go awrie? Alas poer blind creatures, do they not see, that the whore of Babylon should deceiue the notions and people, and multitudes, and kindreds, & tongues? What would they haue spoken more plainly? But we see if the Lord do not open the eyes, men wander in the darknes, and can not see the cleere light. Well you see beloued how this agreeth with that which we had before in the 13. chapter: where the beast with two hornes, causeth all sorts of people, and that of all nations

ons, to receiue the marke of the beast, or the number of his name: and that those which had not the same, might not buie or sel. Yea they must be killed that would not worship the image of the beast. Here is the holy catholike church of the poperie, here is their multitude, their vniuersality and consent: here is great Babel the mother of whoredoms and abominations of the earth: here is she that with her golden cuppe, hath entised the kings & the great nations to commit all filthy whoredome with her, yea and to be euen drunken with the wine of her fornication. And shall this whore because of her multitude brag that she is the true catholike church?

Let vs proceed: And the tenne hornes which thou sawest in the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eate her flesh, and shall burne her with fire. In this the Angell sheweth, that the same kings which did hold vp the whore, shall pull her downe. Wee may not take it of the same men, but of those that succede in the same kingdoms. For the kings of England, of Scotland, of Denmarke, of France, and of other countries which gaue their power to the beast, are dead and gone, if wee respect the persons of the men: and those which succede them now in these kingdoms, which pull downe that vsurped power of Rome, are other persons: but because they succede and gouerne in the same kingdoms, they are sayd to be those tenne hornes of the beast. This prophecie, or this interpretation of the Angell doth euidently shew vnto vs, that the kings of the same countries which maintained the poperie, shall pull it downe. You may iudge by our owne countrie. The kings of England, at the least diuers of them, in times past were one horne of the beast, and gaue their power to him, for to defend him. But King Henry the 8. King Edward the 6. and Queene Elizabeth, haue pulled him downe what they can. They haue for their part made the whore desolate and naked: and so haue diuers kings of other lands done. This goeth forward daily, and in the end they shall destroy her. Are they not more then blind which see not the fulfilling of this prophecie? Did not the kings of Europe with one consent giue their power to the beast? were they not euen as hornes for him to push withall? And haue not diuers of their successors now hated the Romish whore and made her naked? These bee also called the tenne hornes in the beast, not because they bee any strength vnto him, but because they sit vpon the same thrones of their auncestors, which maintained the poperie. In that respect they be the same hornes, but not for the whore, but against her. And that wee may knowe the whole worke commeth of God, the Angell addeth, For God hath put into their hearts to doe his will, and to doe with one consent, to giue their kingdom to the beast, vntill the words of God be fulfilled. This may seeme hard that the Angell sayth, God put it into the heart of the kings to maintaine the poperie. Did not the diuell seduce them? Yes verely. But yet after a sort the Lord doth it, when for the wickednes of the world, hee in his righteous iudgement letteth loose Satan to deceiue. For so the Apostle writeth, God shall send them strong delusion to beleue lyes. 2. Thess. 2. The Lord threatened for the contempt of the Gospel, that he would send the great Antichrist, and that these words of God might be

be fulfilled, by his iust iudgement the kings were deceived, & stood for the maintenance of Antichrist. But now the time being come that the man of sinne should bee disclosed, and that most filthie whore should be pulled downe, the eyes of the kings are opened, and they banish out of their kingdoms that Romish power and Idolatrous religion, and set vp the true worship of God. Here is an alteration in the hornes: and this as I sayd commeth of God.

Now the last thing remaineth, and that is, what this woman is which sitteth vpon the beast. The Angell doth not in plaine tearme say, the woman, the gorgious whore which thou sawest with the golden cuppe in her hand, is Rome: for that had been open to all the wicked, from whom the matter is hid: but he sayth as much in effect to those that haue their eyes opened, as if hee had named Rome: when he sayth, and the woman which thou hast seene is the great citie which hath the kingdome ouer the kings of the earth. What citie held the dominion ouer the kings of the earth at that time when the Angell told this to Saint Iohn, but Rome? Miserable poore are the shifts and cauls of the Iesuits vpon this place. Faine they would defend Rome from being this filthie whore, and they say if it bee Rome, it was while the Heathen Emperours liued. That is true, but doe they not see plainly in this booke that the great Antichrist should raigne in the same citie where the Heathen persecutors were? Well, let them that will be blind, be blind still. We see it is most euident, for the Angell telleth vs, that Rome is this filthie whore of Babylon. Let vs hate her, if we loue God.



The 38. Sermon.

CHAP. 18.

- 1 And after these things I saw another Angell come downe from heauen hauing great power, and the earth was lightened with his glorie.
- 2 And he cried out mightily with a lowd voyce, saying, It is fallen, it is fallen, Babylon the great citie, and is become the habitation of diuels, and the hold of all foule spirits, and a cage of every vncleane and hatefull bird.
- 3 For all nations haue drunke of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth haue committed fornication with her, and the Marchants of the earth haue waxed rich, of the abundance of her pleasures.
- 4 And I heard another voyce from heauen, saying, Come away from her my people, that ye bee not partaker of her sinnes, and that ye receiue not of her plagues.
- 5 For her sinnes are come up vnto heauen, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

6 Reward

- 6 Rewarde her euen as she hath rewarded you, and geue her double according to her workes: and in the cuppe that she hath filled to you, the reward shall be double.
- 7 In as much as she glorified her selfe, and liued in pleasure, so much more shall be her torment and sorrow: for she sayth in her heart, I sit being a Queene, and am no widowe, and shall see no mourning.
- 8 Therefore shall her plagues come at one day, death and sorrow and famine, and she shall be burnt with fire: for strong is the Lorde God that iudgeth her.



He fall of great Babylon, and her destruction, hath bin briefly touched before in this booke: but here it is set forth more at large. For from the beginning of this chapter, vnto the end of the last chapter, it may well be sayd, that there is nothing but the generall conclusion of the whole prophecie. For through the booke, there hath been set forth and described, the power, the dominion, the pompe, and the crueltie of the enemies of the Church, and what great afflictions they haue cast her into: and now the conclusion painteth forth their viter downfall & destruction, & how she is drawne out of all her miseries, vnto a most happie estate of endles glorie. Almost all that followeth may be reduced to this one poynt. So that the conclusion is thus: These proud tyrannous enemies haue bin aloft, they haue enioyed their riches, honours, pompe and pleasures, they haue condemned, persecuted and afflicted the Church of Christ and her children, and most grievously pressed them downe. But now the case doth alter, the proude persecutors come vnder, and the afflicted is raised vp into glorie. This being the summe, let vs now come more particularly to the matters.

After these things (saith Saint Iohn) I saw another Angell come downe from heauen, hauing great power. Here is he that beateth downe the kingdome of Antichrist, here is he that bringeth the great whore of Babylon to ruine, euen a mighty Angell from heauen. For it is the Lord from heauen that iudgeth that bloody kingdome. But what Angell is this, or what doth he represent? That is first to be enquired. In the 14. chapter he saith, that an Angell did flie in the midst of heauen with an euerglasting gospel to preach, and forthwith downe went great Babylon. Where it is euident, that by the Angell is represented the ministers of the gospel whom the Lord hath raised vp, and sent in these last times, for to recover his afflicted Church from vnder the captiuitie of Babylon. This Angell representeth the selfe same thing, euen the ministrie of the gospel: which seemeth to bee weake and contemptible in the view and iudgement of the world: but yet the efficacie thereof being from heauen is strong and mightie, as it is here said. And we see by experience the mightines thereof, in that it hath cast downe the pompe and the glory of Babel. It hath ouerthrowen the power and pride of the Romish beast, which

the kings of the earth did tremble at. It is not said here in vaine that this Angell hath great power: for he pulleth downe a mightie beast, euen the wonder of the world, the Romane Monarchie.

He sayth further, That the earth was lightened with his glorie. The power of this Angell consisteth in light: as the power of the enemie consisteth in darkenes. The brightness of the light, expelleth and vanquisheth the darkenes. The kingdome of this world is nothing, but spirituall darkenes, and confusion: As we haue scene before in this booke, how the bottomlesse pit was opened, and how the smoke of the pit ascended vp and darkened all. The devil from hell thrust forth by the ministrie of his vicar the pope, all ignorance, errors, lies, and superstition. This Angel with the brightness of the pure word of God expelleth all these: and therefore it is said that the earth was lightened with his glorie. O what darknes had covered the earth, and what foolish things did men beleue in the time of poperie? And what a wonderfull light hath the word of God given, so that euen the simple, yea euen children doe laugh at the things as most fond, which great wise men did then beleue. Yea I may truly say, and whoeuer doth narrowly obserue the matter hee shall find it so, that the brightness of this Angell is such in lighting the earth, that the beames of his light doe pierce euen into the holes of the night birds, which yet doe what they can to hide and couer themselves from the light. I meane the grosse papists, which labour all that they can to vphold their darkenes: for they are euen constrained in many things to feele the power of the light, though they cannot abide it, but faine would vphold the whore of Babell. God for his infinite mercies sake blesse and prosper the holy ministrie of his word that the earth may bee more and more lightened, and that these wretched papists these ministers of Antichrist, may haue neuer a darke hole to couer themselves in. We see the boldnes of those impudent men, and their trauailes, I would it might moue all the seruants of God, to become more zealous & vehement to spread the light of y^e holy gospel. Publish and spread it, and let the Lord worke his holie will and pleasure, for it is the light and the power of the truth, which must strike the stroke.

And he cryed out mightily with a loud voice, saying, it is fallen; it is fallen, great Babylon, &c. The faithful ministers of the Gospell proclaime and that vehemently, that the poperie is fallen, yea that it is most certainly fallen, and shall neuer recover againe. They publish with mightie zeale that Rome is great Babell, and that her dominion ouer the kingdomes of the earth is come to an end. And albeit the papistes labour with tooth and naile, omitting no treacherous practise to recover her fall, and to restore her againe to her former dignitie, yea and beare the ignorant sort in hand that in time they shall preuaile: yet this Angell mightilie denounceth the contrarie. If ye demaund how the ministers and preachers of the Gospell can for certaintie publish this, seeing they be no prophets to see what shall bee in time to come. I answer, that this prophetic hath declared and doth declare evidently, that Rome shall neuer recover her fall, the pope shall neuer bee esteemed againe, but labour he, and all that be for him, both kings and Iesuite priests, what they can, he shall dayly by degrees come downe more and more, euen till the vtter and final

nall destruction. And now what is Babylon, what is Rome, what is the Church of Rome now she is fallen? The Angell telleth vs, shee is the habitation of devils, a cage of euery vncleane spirite; and a cage of euery vncleane and hatefull bird. Doe ye not suppose here be a sweete companie to ioyne withall. Al that haue any goodnes in them, doe forsake Rome with her most filthy abominations. The devils and vncleane spirites, and vncleane birds, beare all the sway there. We must note that the Angell here in describing the destruction of the Romish Babell, followeth the description which the old Prophets, Esay and Ieremie vse in setting forth the desolations of that other Babell in the East. For Esay chap. 13. and Ieremie chap. 51. doe set forth what vgly and horrible beasts should dwell in that Babell, and what hatefull vncleane birds should nest there. Now as those vgly beasts and euill famous fowles were of old time the Inhabitants of Babell in the East: So the holy ghost sheweth, that Rome the Western Babell, is the habitation of devils, and the hold of all vncleane spirites. See beloned the glory of the Church of Rome, which boasteth herselfe to be the pure spouse of Christ, No man, she saith, can be saved, vnlesse he become one of her obedient children: and the Lord saith, that she is the habitation of devils. Their doctrine is the doctrine of devils, their worship is the worship of devils, their workes are the workes of devils. For what doctrine doe they teach (a few things excepted) but flat contrary to the written worde of God? What worship but of idols, and of rotten bones? And what are their workes but treasons, seditions, periuries, and slaughters? If men be not blinde they may see, that Rome is the very habitation of devils. Is it then good ioyning with them, or is it (as some take it) a matter so indifferent to bee of their Charch? Iudge in your selues brethren. Yea but will some man say, if it were certaine that Rome is Babylon. Alas that men should doubt, there is nothing more cleere. If there were but one man in the world of stature, proportion, and visage farre differing from all other, and a right cunning painter should draw his picture in all points from top to toe: could any doubt that had scene the same man, and then should see his picture, but that it were his onely picture? The holy Ghost in this prophetic hath perfectly drawen the picture of Babell, and they that peruse the picture and looke vpon Rome, find them so like in all partes as nothing can bee more: and they shall find none other in the whole world, whom the picture doth resemble. The onely reason or cause why men bee not fully resolued that Rome is Babylon, is that they doe not diligently peruse this picture. Be diligent in this booke, and thou shalt be out of all doubt that Rome is the whore great Babell, and the power of the papacie, the beast. If thou wilt when thou knowest this, ioyne thy selfe with the habitation of devils, and with the hold of vncleane spirites, thou shalt together with them be saved. But now what is the cause of this heauie indignation of God against Rome? What is it wherewith she hath prouoked the wrath of the Almighty to destroy her, and to make her the habitation of devils? The cause is repeated, which hath bene before rehearsed, that all nations haue drunke of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth haue committed fornication with her, and the marchants of the earth haue bene made rich of the abundance of her

pleasures. Behold what an heinous thing it is before God, that Rome hath so corrupted religion, & that she hath made the nations drunken with the raging wine of her fornication, and that she hath drawn both the kings and their subjects to commit spirituall whoredome. For whereas men ought to keepe themselves chaste and pure to God in his holy worship, that is, to worship him alone in spirite and truth, euen according as he hath prescribed in his holy word: the Romish whore hath entised them to her inuentions, euen to worship Idols, and so to commit spirituall whoredome with deuils, and with her false wares hath enriched her marchants. Is not this a great matter, especially when wee consider vnto how many she hath spread these her whoredomes? then maruaile not though it bee sundrie times repeated.

And now S. Iohn saith, he heard another voice from heauen saying, come away from her my people, &c. Here is a calling for separation and a reason rendered to perswade therunto. The voice is from heauen that willet the seruants of God to come away from her. It is therefore the voice and the commaundement of the Lord and not of man. This voice in these latter daies hath bene and is founded forth by men vpon the earth: but because it is by the word of God, the voyce is said to be, and that rightly, from heauen: for that which is of God is from heauen. There is much adoe about this point: the papists cry out against the preachers that call for this separation, and against the christian princes which compell their subjects vnto it, that they be Schismatikes. Ye make separation, say they, from the true catholike church, ye forsake the chaire of Peter, ye renounce Christes vicar the pastor of your soules, with other such thundering speeches: but we see they are Babel that abominable whore, we regard not their vaine speeches, but follow the voice and commaundement of God which is from heauen, both in separating our selues, and in perswading and drawing as many as we can from their wicked society. We see the danger which is the reason that is here vsed to perswade: namely, least we be partakers of her sinnes, and so consequently of her plagues. For how can a man be of that societie, and not be partaker of their sinnes? And if he be partaker of their sins, must he not needs be partaker with the in their plagues? In the 14. chapter there is set forth the heavy vengeance of God vpon those that forsake not the worship and societie of the beast. And it is, because many are so leath to be drawn from the Romish religion in as much as it hath bene so long imbraced by their auncesters. In like manner here is a great terror set before vs least we might imagine it to be as a thing indifferent to be of the popish assemblies. If her sinnes were but few and light, small punishment, in comparison should belong vnto the same: For the punishment followeth according to the greatnes of the sins. As men deserue, so are they plagued. And for the same cause that all men may well vnderstand, that the societie with the whore of Babel, the ioyning with the poperie, the imbracing the lawes of the Romish Antichrist, shall plunge them deepe into the gulf of most horrible plagues, and dreadfull vengeance of almighty God, the voice from the Lord saith, that her sinnes are come vp to heauen, and God hath remembred her iniquities. What plagues thinke ye shall follow

follow those sinnes which reach vp vnto heauen? What an heape of sins hath great Babel the mother of whoredoms heaped and piled vp? How hath Rome filled the world with abominations? This voice doth set them before vs in a lump, and if a man would take the suruey of them in particular, he shall neuer be able. Who is able fully to declare the corruptions, errors, abominable inuentions, superstitions, and idolatries, which Rome hath spread vpon the face of the earth? Who is able to set out the filthy life of Popes, Cardinals, Abbots, Monkes, Priests, Friars, and Nunnes? The earth doth stinke of their vncleannes. Their own histories do testifie very much. Moreouer, what crueltie haue they shewed, what slaughters and murders haue they committed vpon the holy seruants of God, which haue reprobred their enormities? What treacheries, and what treasons do they worke and daily practise, if they could bring them about?

Now consider this I pray you, that who so doth not separate himselfe from them, but is of their societie and religion, he is a member of that bodie, hee hath his part in all those sinnes. Let not men thinke thus, I neuer did commit whoredome nor incest: I did neuer persecute nor shed blood. Therefore I haue nought to doe with their sinnes, if they haue so heaped them vp, that they reach vnto the heauens. O be not deceiued: for if thou dost not separate thy selfe from Babel, the voyce from heauen telleth thee, that thou shalt be partaker of her sinnes, and so consequently of her plagues. Her plagues shall bee exceeding great, because her sinnes doe reach vp vnto heauen, and so thy plagues shall be great, because thou art guiltie of her sinnes. This is it that he said, who soeuer doth worship the beast or his image, or hath his marke or the number of his name, he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy Angels, and of the Lambe. If ye take them to be grievous plagues which God doth inflict, not onely in this life, but especially in the torments of hell, then separate your selues and come out from Babylon, renounce the poperie and all Romish trash, and cleaue fast to the holy Gospell of Iesus Christ, which shall saue your soules. Regarde not the clamors of the wicked papists, but obey this voyce from heauen. They call vs vnto all filthie abominations, and spirituall whoredomes, and this voyce calleth vs vnto the pure worship of God. Be not seduced by those which shall speake thus vnto ye. Doth not the Church of Rome beleue in Christ? are they not Christians? what though they differ in some things, yet as long as they denie not Christ, why may not men safely ioyne themselves with them? In deede they doe not denie Christ in word, but they both denie his doctrine and persecute it. They professe some godlines in shew, but haue denied the power thereof. And now further where the voice saith, that God hath remembred her iniquities: It may be said, did the Lord God euer forget them? Or did he not regard them? Doubtles they were alwayes before the Lord, and he could neuer forget them: for there is no ignorance nor forgetfulness in God. He is not like vnto a mortall man. But when the Lord passeth by, and suffereth the wicked to go unpunished, when he doth not execute vengeance, they doe imagine that hee doth not regard their doings. They suppose that they shall

neuer be called vnto any reckoning. Also the faithfull are weake, and according to flesh and blood thinke it long, & are assualted with some doubts, as if God had forgotten all these hard dealings of the wicked enemies. When therefore the Lord taketh the matter in hand, & beginneth to execute the office of a iudge, then doth he declare that he remembreth the iniquities which are past, and so is said to remember: for the holy ghost in the scripture applieth himselfe vnto our capacitie, speaking of God. The godly seruants of Christ which liued in former times, and beheld the blasphemies of the Romish beast, and withall considered how long the same had continued, and saw no appearance of vengeance vpon them, had nothing but faith in the word of God to support them, there was none outward thing to lead them to see that God did regard or remember the iniquities of Babell: but in these daies we haue besides the word of God, the sight and view of the thing before our eyes. We see how God hath begun to execute vengeance, and how that he remembreth and will not let passe the wicked deeds of the papistes. The voice from heauen addeth yet further, saying, reward her, euen as she hath rewarded you, and giue her double, according to her works: and in the cup that she hath filled to you, fill her the double. The summe of this is, that the seruants of God are not only to remoue and to separate themselves from great Babylon: but also to execute vengeance vpon her: for the Lord God that iudgeth and casteth her down, doth it by instruments. And as the 137. Psalm pronounceth them blessed that should execute vengeance vpon Babel, for the crueltie which she had shewed to the church: so doubtles we are to make accompt that it is a thing most highly pleasing God, when his seruants seek reuenge euen to the full vpon this Romish whore, for all the euill which she hath wrought vnto the Church. And to assure vs of this, the Lord from heauen willet to reward her, and that double, yea euen to the full, for all the euill which shee hath done to the holy worshippers of God. But it may be sayd, vengeance is to bee executed only by such as beare the sword: priuate persons are forbidden to reuenge. How then is this to be taken? Are all the faithfull here willed to be reuenged vpon her, and to recompence her for her euill deeds? Or is this spoken only vnto such as bee publique magistrates? To this I answer that the recompence of vengeance here spoken of, is of diuers sorts, and some way to be executed by all the faithfull people. Rome hath murdered the Saints, and shed the Bloud of the Martyrs of Christ: now to reward this, and to shed her bloud, belongeth only to princes, and ciuill magistrates. They be here called vpon, that way to reward her: and are much to be blamed if herein they be negligent. Down with her, make no doubt, the Lord from heauen doth will ye. And how, shall the christian princes answer it before God, if they neglect this holy worke? Again, the Romish synagogue, hath glorified herselfe and her owne decrees, boasting that she hath authoritie ouer all: and reuileth, reprocheth and condemneth them al as heretikes which reiect her abominations. Now to bee reuenged vpon her in this, the ministers of the worde are to disclose and to paint her forth to the world. They are to lay open all her whoredomes and most filthy trecheries. They are to manifest that her doctrine and worship, is the doctrine

trine and worship of diuels: that the Kings, and Princes, and people, may hate and abhorre her. Such as be seduced by this whore, crye out that the zealous preachers of the Gospell doe raile and blaspheme when they doe this: but what are they to care for the reproches of sinfull men, when the voyce from heauen willet her to be reuenged vpon her and not to spare her? And then touching the priuate persons, thus farre they are to bee readie to execute vengeance vpon her, euen to be readie and most willing at the commaundement of their princes to destroy and pull her downe. They are also as farre as priuate men may, to lay her open in speech, to help to withdraw such from her societie as be seduced. And thus ye may see, that all the seruants of God both high and lowe, euen of every calling are called vpon from heauen, to set vpon great Babell the mother of whoredomes and abominations of the earth, & to be reuenged vpon her for al the euill which she hath done to the Church of God. Would to God this voyce, euen this heavenly voyce did sound more shrill in the eares of all men; that they might bee earnestly moued vnto this holy worke. It is the worke which the Lord from heauen doth call men vnto. It is that which is highly pleasing vnto the Lord, and in which we shall doe him great seruice. Wherefore we are to remember what is said by the Prophet, stirring men vp to execute the Lords vengeance vpon the other Babell in the East, as namely, Cursed is he that doth the worke of the Lord negligently. Is Rome and the Romish religion so abominable to the Lord for all their vngodly doings, both against his holy worship and people? Is the time come that he will haue his iudgements and vengeance executed vpon them? And hath his voyce from heauen called vpon all men to reward that bloudie citie and wicked synagogue, and to recompence them double, for all the euill which they haue done to vs? and shall wee then bee excused, if we be negligent? Doth not the curse then belong vnto vs? Are wee not of the number of slothfull seruants? Doe we regard how much God is glorified, and his Church eased, by the decay and ruines of that horrible kingdome of the great Antichrist? Let the Christian princes bee readie to doe their office: let the preachers of the Gospell performe their duetie: and let all good people bee readie, and not wanting for their part to execute the vengeance of God vpon this filthy harlot. Doth not the Lord himselfe as it were sound the trumpet vnto vs from heauen? Ye see how the seruants of Antichrist do bestirre them to maintaine their kingdome: They fight and strue for the diuell, and are most vehement: and shall we be slacke in the cause of God? Shall they bee more forward and bold for their worship of the dragon and of the beast, then wee for the holy worship of God? When yee heare of the great trauailes and labours of the Iesuite priests, of their zeale for the defence of poperie, and how they aduenture euen vnto the perill of death, let it make vs much ashamed. For is it meet that they in such a cause should goe before vs? Their reward is from the dragon and from the beast, or rather together with them, euen endles destruction. But we, if we fight valiantly vnder the banner of Christ, in the defence of his trueth against Antichrist, against the whore of Babell, euen to pull her downe and for to destroy her, shall raigne in glorie with our great Captaine. What shall wee then say vnto these neuters, which haue no zeale.

zeale nor heate in them against the whore great Babel? Doe they any thing at all regarde this heauenly voyce? Or be they worthy to bee numbred among the seruants of God? The heauenly voyce doth yet further declare what vengeance God will haue to be executed vpon the Romish Babel, or in what measure: for here is a proportion noted, that according to the height and loftines of her pride and glorious magnificence, vnto which she hath by trecherous meanes aduanced her selfe, and according to the great abundance of her daintie and delicate pleasures in which she hath taken her solace, the greatnes of her shame and sorrowes should bee answerable. Beloued, this is a very great thing which the voyce vttereth, because it requireth and denounceth her torment and shame in an exceeding measure. For if ye will stand vpon this proportion, what glorie, and pompe, and magnificence vnder heauen hath been comparable to the glorie of Rome, vnder the dominion of Emperors and Popes? If also ye might take the view of her pleasures in the time of the papacie, as namely, in what delights touching worldly things her Popes, Cardinals, and chiefe prelates haue liued, where should they bee matched? Then if her shame, and infamie must exceed as much as her glorie hath exceeded, and her sorrowes and torments must abound according to the abundance of her delights, ye may easily see that all things denounced here against her be exceeding great. All such then as are to execute vengeance vpon the whore great Babel, must not be moued with pitie. They must not doe as King Saul did in sparing Agag and the fattest things: but where the Lord commaundeth all seueritie, they ought not to remit. Shall man spare and shewe mercie where God will not?

And now to come somewhat neerer, the voyce leadeth vs to behold the toppe of her pride, glorie and pleasures: for it followeth, She sayth in her heart. I sit being a Queene, and am no widowe, and shall see no mourning. In the daies of her prosperitie, euen when she helde the dominion ouer the kings of the earth, Rome was in this securitie, that she did promise to her selfe (for she said in her heart) that her pompous estate should indure for euer. I sit as a Queene, I haue the superiortie ouer the kings of the earth for temporall matters, and I am the head of the Catholike Church, I am the spouse of Christ, I haue all authoritie and power in causes ecclesiasticall, I am eternall, my power shall neuer faile, I shall neuer be remoued. I am not as a solitarie or desolate widowe, I haue many louers which are strong to defende mee, I shall neuer feeble any want or sorrow. Is not this a great height of glorie wherein she hath glorified her selfe by vsurping such power? And being so horrible a filth, is it not wonderful presumption to promise to her selfe an estate so durable? But wee see how she hath been deceiued, the Lord pronounced it before, and her pompe is decayed, she is come downe, euen the Ladie of the world, and hath already lost the greater part of her louers, and of her wealth. And now looke how much higher in glorie and pleasures she hath been aboute all, so much deeper must she be cast downe into shame and sorrowes. Then Rome and the Romish Church are in the extreames: the highest in glorie here in the world, and the lowest in shame and infamie: the most abounding in all pleasures, the deepest

pest in sorrowes. I pray you obserue, what was higher in this world then the Romish synagogue ruling ouer al as the spouse of Christ? And now what baser, what viler, and what more dishonourable thing is there in the world, then to bee esteemed and called the great whore Babel, the mother of abominations and whoredomes, euen the synagogue of Satan, the kingdome of the great Antichrist? She was aloft, pull her downe to these, sayth the Lord, lay her open and disclose her to the full. She did flow in pleasures and delights, giue her the like measure of torments. These things are well come to passe already, and shall fully bee accomplished, for ye may reade what followeth, therefore shall her plagues come at one day, death, and sorrow, and famine, and she shall bee burnt with fire: for strong is the Lord God that iudgeth her. Shall we doubt of this, when the Lord hath thus before hand denounced it? Shall we not wish for the time when this shall be fully accomplished, and doe the best wee can to bring it forward? I know it seemed a thing vnpossible when the Pope sate with his triple crowne, in his glorie & pomp, euen as a God vpon earth, that euer that kingdome should bee cast downe: for what power should ouermatch it? Here is declared what power, euen the power of God from heauen: for he sayth, strong is the Lord God that iudgeth her. What is able to stand which hath the Lord God almightie against it? Therefore be sure Babel shall downe.



The 39. Sermon.

CHAP. 18.

- 9 Then shall the kings of the earth bewaile her and lament for her, which haue committed fornication with her, when they shall see the smoake of her burning.
- 10 And shall stand a farre off for feare of her torments, saying, Alas, alas, that great citie Babylon that mightie citie, for in one houre is thy iudgement come.
- 11 And the merchants of the earth shall weepe and waile ouer her, for no man buyeth their ware any more.
- 12 The ware of gold and silver, and precious stones, and of pearles, and of fine linnen, and of purple, and of silke, and of scarlet, and of all manner of thinne wood, and of vessels of Iuorie, and of all vessels of most precious wood, and of brasse, and of iron, and of marble,
- 13 And of Sinamon, and odors, and oyntment, and frankincense, and wine, and oyle, and fine flower, and wheate, and beasts and sheepe, and horses and chariots, and bodies and soules of men.
- 14 And the apples which thy soule insted after, are departed from thee, and all things.

things which were fat and excellent, are departed from thee, and thou shalt finde them no more.

- 15 The merchants of these things which were made rich, shall stand a farre off from her, for feare of her torment, weeping and wailing:
 16 Saying, Alas, alas, that great citie which was clothed in fine linnen, and purple, and scarlet, and gilded with gold and precious stones, and pearles: for in one houre so great riches come to desolation.
 17 And euery shippe gouernour, and all they that occupie shippes and shipmen, and as many as worke in the sea, stood a farre off,
 18 And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What citie is like to this great citie?
 19 And they cast dust on their heads, and cried weeping, and wayling, and saying, Alas, alas, that great citie, wherein were made rich all that had shippes in the sea, by reason of her costlines: for at one houre is she made desolate.



Such as will diligently reade the old Prophets, shall finde it their vsuall manner, whensoever they would in most liuely and effectuall sort describe the destruction of any kingdome or famous citie, to set forth or to call for a song of lamentation: for by this means the matter was more cleere, & did more affect and moue the minds of the people. Now ye are to remember that this prophecy, doth imitate those prophecies of olde: And so the more liuely to paint out the ruines, and the vtter subuersion of the Romish Babel, euen of their monarchie, religion and citie it selfe, yea to declare how horrible the destruction of these shall be, here are brought in her louers of sundry sortes lamenting and bewayling her case: and these are kings, marchants, and shipmasters. Herebee in deede reasons rendred of the sorrow, and lamentation which euery sort of these doe make. Some of them loued Babel for the pleasures and delights in which they liued vnder her, and others for their gaine. Her destruction bringing an end to both, they lament grievously. We may here note by the way vpon the cause of their lamentation, what things haue allured men to be in loue with the whore great Babel, euen carnall pleasures and riches. He beginneth with the kings of the earth, they sing the first part of this doleful dittie. They sorrow, they weepe, & they howle for her. But it is most euident by this prophetic, that the kings of the earth shall pull downe and destroy this monstrous whore. How then is it sayd that they shall bewayle her fall? We must consider that this is but a figure, in which after a sort the kings of the earth which are dead and gone in time of poperie are brought in lamenting. We are not to be scrupulous more then for the scope of the matter, which is to paint out an horrible destruction. Moreouer this is manifest, that although the kings of the earth shall pull downe the monarchie, the religion and citie of Rome, yet some kings are still for her, and seeke to vphold her: And if they also should fall from her, yet she hath her kings. For her chiefe prelates as cardinals and legates, are euen kings: They take themselues kings

fel-

fellowes, and were wont to take the vpper hand of kings. How wantonly these cardinals and great prelates haue liued, in what pompe, pleasures, and politie, vnder the whore, and what whordomes they haue committed with her, both carnall and spiritual, the world knoweth. The romish doctrine is delight-some to those great persons: in as much as it openeth the gappe vnto all filthy abominations in carnal delights, by teaching that for money they may obtaine pardon at the popes hands, or by their riches they may make some satisfaction & merit eternal life, or blot out their offences by some penance. O what a griefe shall it be vnto them, when they behold the smoke of her burning? The destruction of Rome shall be such, as that into farre countries the smoke as it were of her burning shall be seene. Yea her torment shall be so horrible, that these kings shall not dare for all their might to come nigh for to rescue her: but for feare shall stand a farre off. And this dolefull voyce shall they vter, alas, alas, that great citie Babylon, that mighty citie, for in one hower is thy iudgement come. How it grieueth them, and how much they sorrow and lament to remember what the riches, the power, the pompe, the glorie, and the magnificence of Rome hath beene, and to see her now quite destroyed in so deadfull manner. They were perswaded that no power should be able to destroy so mightie a citie. Who could resist such a monarchie? All the world wondered at it, and the kings did tremble and quake for feare to displease the pope. They could neuer looke for such an alteration: for from whence should they come that shoulde worke it? We see that the voyce and sound of the holy Gospell is so mightie, that it hath already shaken the maine pillars and towers of great Babel. Rome hath lost already the greatest part of her preheminance and dignitie. The pope which was honored and feared as a petie god, is now despised as the most vile minister of Satan, the head, and stander bearer of the wicked apostacie, which is the kingdome of the great Antichrist. The riches of that citie are diminished, her friends haue forsaken her, she waxeth feeble: And yet the Iesuits and other papists doe vaunt and glorie that their kingdome shall neuer be cast downe. Peters ship (say they) may be tossed in the surges and waues, but it can neuer be drowned. Most true it is that the spouse of Christ, euen the true Catholike Church shall neuer miscarie in this huge gulf of the world: for she is founded vpon the rocke, she is supported by the truth which is infallible. If the church of Rome were indeed the Catholike Church, as they vainely boast, then should it neuer fall. But the light of Gods word doth not cast downe, but build vp the true Church: It casteth down Rome & that romish religion, being nothing but mans inuentions. One thing we may yet note further in the speech of the kings, when they doe confesse that it is Gods iudgement. It teacheth vs that, which indeed we finde true by experience, that the wicked men do behold indeede the hand and power of the Lord God, and doe acknowledge it is his iudgement for wickednes, but yet doe not repent them of their euill. They behold how the glorie of Rome decaieth, they shall see her full destruction in time, and shall say it is for sinne, but yet they will loue and pitie her. Let not this

this seeme strange vnto any man: for when the heauie hand of God is vpon any notorious vngodly man, ye shal heare him acknowledge that it is for his vngodly behauiour, by which he hath prouoked the Lord: And he will wish he had liued otherwise, feeling that all the delights and pleasures of the sinnes are vanished, and that the sting remaineth, and yet repenteth not, but if he recouer doeth follow the same wayes againe as greedily as euer before. Some will say perhaps, if a man in that estate do feele and confesse that God pursueth his wickednes, and wisheth he had neuer liued in such sort, doeth he not repent? I answer, in some kinde of repentance, he repenteth for the time, but not vnto amendment: He is grieved not for the fowlnes of the sinne, or hatred thereof, he doth lament not of any loue of God or of goodnesse, but indeed at the torment which he feeleth sinne doth bring. And therefore when the dread and feeling of the horror of vengeance is ouer, he rusheth againe into the same sinnes, and liueth euen as he did before.

It followeth in the text, that the marchants of the earth shall weepe and waile ouer her, for no man buyeth their ware any more. Kings (wee haue seene) which committed whoredome and liued in pleasure with her, lament for the fall of Babel: and now come the marchants with their part of the lamentation. They weepe and waile, and the holy Ghost noteth the cause, euen this, that no man any more buyeth their wares. Worldly men delight in gaine, it is a sweete thing vnto them, yea a very sweete thing, nothing sweeter. Looke then how much the sweeter, so much the more bitter and grievous is the losse thereof. And hereof it commeth that the hope of gaine failing, men lament and weepe dolefully. Take away the gaine of earthly minded men, and ye euen as it were pluck out their bowels. Behold then how the marchants doe lament, because with the destruction of the Romish tyranny, the hope of their gaine faileth, in as much as their wares lie in their hands and no man will buy them. But let vs know who are these marchants, and what bee their wares. The wares are noted in the next verse following, and there we are to enquire what they be. The marchants themselues are not named, but known by their wares, euen popish marchants, euen all that made gaine of the trash and trumperies which were solde very decre in the poperie, by which men sought helpe for their soules. To reckon vp all sorts of these marchants which sold the popish wares, would bee a tedious matter, and to no great purpose, seeing it is knownen that in the Church of Rome all things, and euen among all sorts from the highest to the lowest, haue beene set to sale, and sold for readie money. The histories of former times doe shew, that in the papisme there was all ouer nothing but euen a marte of buying and selling, in which the marchants of al sorts were assembled. Who had any office or roome almost among them, but as it were in some riuer or ditch spread his nets and did fish for gold? These marchants then doe bewaile and lament ouer Babel, because no man any longer buyeth their wares, and they bee very many. And now touching their wares which no man buyeth any more, they bee rehearsed.

They be some of them of the richest things and most pretious in the world, as of gold,

gold, siluer, pretious stones, and pearles. And all of them besides, of great account: As one sort of fine linnen, purple, silke, and scarlet. An other sort of costly wood, as of thin wood, of Iuorie, and of pretious trees. An other of brasse, Iron, and marble. Then come synamon, odours, oyntment, and franckincense, wine, oyle, fine flower, wheate, beasts, sheepe, horses, chariots. And last of all, the bodies & soules of men. Are these the wares of the kingdome of the great Antichrist? and will no man buy them any more? Do men set light by gold or siluer? do they not esteeme pretious stones and pearles? Are silkes and scarlets now begunne to bee despised? Or were any of these euer more esteemed then they be at this day? Will not men in all landes couet after these things euen so long as the world standeth? And will they not gladly buy them? How then is it sayd here, that no man buyeth their wares any more? I answer, that the things wherof their wares were made are still in price: but they had greatly increased the value, and made their gaine very much, by turning them into their wares, which gaine is decayed. Gold is valued and esteemed at the same price it was, so is siluer, pearle, and pretious stones. But now as they were in their hallowed thinges in the Church of Rome, in their Masses, in Crosses, Chalice, Images, Myters, and such like, or in their adorning of shrines, and temples, they be not regarded since the poperie went downe. They be no longer in request, they be no marchandise for any honest mā. Men wil buy them as the metal or pearle, or stone is worth, but not at that excessiue price which they sold them at before as their wares. True it is that by stealth they send abroad their *Agnus deies*, their hallowed beades, and other such trash vnto the blind superstitious papists in all landes, and so picke vp as it were pedlers, some siluer, both nothing to the gaine which they made in the times that are past. For them now to buy fine linnen, silks, purple, and scarlet, to sell againe, they can doe little or no good, there be other marchants can doe it better, and now turned into coapes, vestiments, and all maner of popish attire, no man will giue one penie the more, but the lesse, and so their gaine is gone. No man doth seeke vnto them now for their Iuorie and other fine wood, for brasse, and Iron, and marble, to adorne Temples, Idols, or monasteries. Their market for these things is past, they can dazle the eies of men no longer with these pompous shewes. Wonderfull great was their gaine in these thinges when they made the world beleue that by such toyes they should haue pardon, and merite eternall life: but now the word of God hath shewed their false packing, they haue cold takings. In their ceremonies, and about their Idolatrous worship, they had their wares of sweet odours, of oile and franckincense, of ointments, and wine, and fine flower, of which they made great gaine, which now is also gone. To feed the bellies, and to serue the pompe of the great prelates, there were such as prouided wheate, beasts, sheepe, horses, and chariots. Now their kitchens waxing cold, and their pompous traine decaying, such officers may beg. Thus haue ye seene sundrie sorts of their wares, which since the poperie decayed are but little in request, and the marchants haue but small takings, by which the marchandise of the Romish Church is so cleerely noted, that no man which hath had any sight or knowledge how all was for money in the poperie, can doubt but that the downfall of

poperie is here described. But yet here is the last braunch remaining, which doth more perfectly set them forth then any of the rest, in as much as there can none bee found in the world, which haue made such gaine of mens soules as they haue. The Pope for money by his pardons could bring what soules he lusted to heauen. The Abbots and priors would send them also thither, and assure them of eternall blessednes both in soule and body, which would giue liberally to the maintenance of their dennes. Euery popish priest for a sum of money could draw out of his budget his wares, euen trentals of masses, and diriges to bring the soules of the dead out of Purgatorie. What should I speake of their common and ordinarie buying and selling of benefices, whereby the bodies and soules of men are euen bought and sold, as horses and oxen are in the market? A sweete gaine made the pope and his Cardinals, Bishops, Abbots, Monkes, Friars, and popish priestes, with all the rabblement of pardoners and confessors of the bodies and soules of men. Beloued, what cleerer description can bee made of the Romish Church, then this which yee haue here? Was not the whole poperie a mart in which there was buying and selling of wares? And where are the soules of men sold for money, but among them? Where yee see so many sorts of wares which haue beene esteemed as most pretious, being hallowed by the pope or popish prelates, y men did giue great sums of money for, which now no mā wil giue ought for, remēber this prophecie: & behold the wonderful kindnes of God, which for the establishing of his seruants in y truth, hath so long before described the downfall of great Babel. For if mē might doubt so long as she stood in the loftines of her glory, yet the maner of her fall taketh away al doubt, & manifesteth her to be y great whore. And hauing thus declared that the wares of her marchāts are no longer salable, no man will giue money for the, their market is done, they may packe and bee gone: the holy Ghost proceedeth to manifest, how the Church of Rome shall lose and forgoe all her pleasant, delicate, daintie, rich, and pompous things. He calleth them the apples which her soule lusted after, and the fat things. These were sweete apples which euery tree doth not beare: but yet euery kingdome and nation vnder the papacie did affoord great plentie of them. They were very great apples: as monasteries, abbeyes, and great dignities which caryed with them much pompe, delight, and pleasures. These were fat things, euen of the fatteft vpon the earth. And they are departed from them, they haue lost them: yea which is the more grieuous, they haue lost them, and shall neuer find them any more. Such as neuer had a thing, the want thereof doth not so much grieue them, as it doth those which had it and haue lost it. And he that hath lost a goodly pleasant rich thing, his griefe is so much the greater, if he haue lost it, not for a time, but euen as they say, for all euer. When the popish sort doe passe by the great Monasteries, and Abbeyes, and see the ruinous heapes, and remember the fat reuenues and pleasures which they had, and all the glorie and pompe which their great prelates had, it grieueth them, they shake their heads, they wish to haue those goodly apples and fat things restored to them againe: but that shall neuer come to passe, they haue lost them for euer. This glorious harlot, the Romish Church, feasted and fed her children daintily with sweete and costly fat things: but now her table

is

is bare, and her dishes are empty: and her children in many places are glad to gnaw vpon a crust. What abundance of wealth had those popish marchants heaped vp, and at her destruction they shall stand a farre off, weeping and howling. They loue her for the riches and pleasures which she brought them, and therefore they are sorrowfull at her fall. But although they loue her neuer so much, yet they stand a far off and dare not approach neere for to rescue, or for to ayd her, because her torment and vengeance shall be so horrible. Rome then, and the romish church and monarchy shall be destroyed with such terrible vengeance, that not one of all her louers and best friends shall dare to come nigh, but shall stand a far off. The most which they can do is to crie out, alas, alas, that great city, which was clothed in fine linnen, and purple, and scarlet, and girded with gold, and precious stones, and pearles: for in one houre so great riches come to desolation. Marke here beloued what it is which greeneeth the papists, which causeth them to cry out, alas, alas: for it is worth the marking, because they pretend the care of Gods glorie and of mens soules: but it is farre otherwise. They haue gloried in the exceeding greatnes of their city & church: and now see it brought to nought, and that is it which causeth them mournfully to say, that great city. The greatnes sticketh in their minde. Moreover they haue in Rome, and in the romaine monarchie bene very rich, and richly decked with all precious things which they here recite, and wherein all their glory did consist, the losse of these doth greenee them full sore. For these things being gone, what is there in al the Romish religion worthy to be looked vpon? The true church of Christ is decked with many heauenly gifts and spirituall graces, which do make her very glorious euen in the midst of all distresses, afflictions, and pouerties. The Synagogue of Antichrist, that great whore Babel, being destitute of all graces, and spirituall ornaments, and shining in the rich attyre of corruptible things, as of gold, of pearles, of precious stones, of purple, and of silks, when these are gone, she is a soule filthy, vgly, and deformed beast. Her friends do lament, that these so rich and precious things come so suddenly vnto vtter desolation.

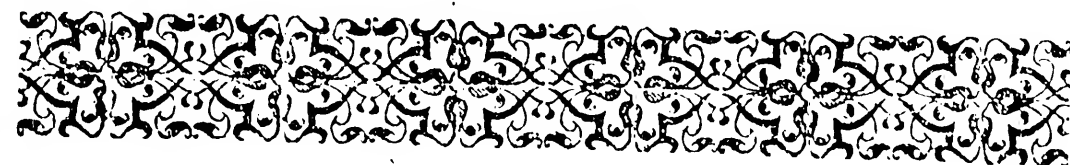
Then here follow a third sort which were made rich by her meanes, and they also do greeuously lament & bewaile her destruction. These are mariners & shipmaisters. While Rome had dominion ouer the kingdoms, and the Pope ruled ouer al euen as a terrible God vpon the earth, there was nothing but trudging ouer the seas thither out of all landes, and againe from thence there was carying and recarying, in so much, that an infinit multitude of mariners and shipmen were continually set on worke and gained greatly therby. To Rome, and from Rome, to Rome, and from Rome, out of all countries, and into all countries. Kings and great princes, Cardinals, and chiefe prelates which had the riches of the world, were caried and recaried. No maruaile then, though these shipmen and mariners are brought in among other her friends, bewailing her destruction: when they shall see the smoke of her torment, standing also a far

Aa 2

off,

off, and not daring to offer her any helpe, they shall cry out, what citie was like vnto this great city? It is here sayd further that they shall cast dust on their heads. Among the Israelites (as the holy histories doe testifie) men in great sorrow, did vse to cast dust on their heads. And therefore to expresse the great griefe of such as lose their gaine by the fall of Babylon, the holy ghost saith, they cast dust on their heads. And they cry weeping and wailing, and say, alas, alas, the great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships on the sea, by her coastlines. Wee see the cause here also expresse of their sorrowe, euen the hope of their gaine taken away. Gaine is so sweet a thing vnto worldly men, that the losse thereof doth vex them sore. The Kings for pleasure, the marchants & ship-masters for their gaine, do lament and bewaile the fall of Babylon. Her vtter destruction is not yet come, but greatly decayed shee is, and many do greatly mourn for the same. Some of her well-willers are in good hope still to hold her vp, and recouer her ruines with the repaire of her breaches: and herein they be exceeding industrious, & venturous: for as in the wars ye shall haue many hardy men that will rush forward and hazard themselves with extreame perill to do some famous exploit only on this mind, that if they can worke the feat they are made for euer, they shalbe magnified and honored, they shall come to riches and dignities. Euen so in the popery, these Iesuites thrust themselves forward into most desperate attempts, hoping that if they can by treacheries and treasons bring their matters about, and so vphold the Babylonish whore, shee will aduance them with great dignities and preferments. For looke but vpon our own land, & if the popery should get the dominion in it againe, what great things should the Bishop of Rome haue to bestow vpon those his forward souldiers? All is for gaine, but they shall labour in vaine, and neuer come vnto it, but be diminished euen to the vtter ouerthrow of their city & kingdom, which shall come in the time that the Lord God almighty in his holy wisdom hath appointed. Thus we haue seene the lamentation for the fall of Babel: now it shall not be amisse here to answer vnto one shift and cauill of the papists. They see it so cleare that this prophesie describing the great Babylon, euen the kingdom of Antichrist, speaketh of a city ruling ouer kingdoms, which hath shed the bloud of the martyrs of Christ. There is no city can be found in the world but Rome vnto which this description can agree. This plainly condemneth the papacy, and Romish monarchie: and vnles the papists can shift it off from Rome, they bee quite vndone. Let vs see then how they shewe their cunuinge about this matter. They say the whole company of the reprobate is called the great whore, cap. 18. They say that the great city which the Angel said had dominion ouer the kings of the earth, is the whole company of the reprobate, as on the contrary, the whole societie of the faithfull is called the city of God. Marke well I pray you, is it a fit kinde of speech to say that the vniuersal corps of the reprobate, or the whole company of the wicked raigneth ouer the kings of the earth? Or shall Kings, Marchants, and Mariners, stand a farre off at the

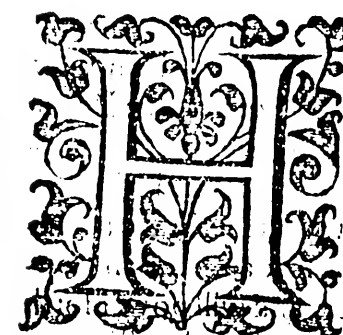
the destruction of the whose societie of the wicked, and mourn for their fall? These be vain shifts, it is a citie, and none other city in the world, but Rome. Obserue euery thing well, and ye shall see it most cleare.



The 40. Sermon.

CHAP. 18.

- 20 O heauens reioyce ouer her, and ye holy Apostles and Prophets, because God hath giuen your Iudgment on her.
- 21 And a mighty Angel tooke up a stone like a great milstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, With such violence shall that great citie Babylon be cast, & shalbe found no more at all.
- 22 And the voice of harpers & musitions, & of pipers and trumpeters, shalbe heard no more in thee at all: & no craftsman of whatsoener craft he be, shalbe found any more in thee: & the sound of a mill shalbe heard no more at all in thee.
- 23 And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee, and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride, shalbe heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth, and with thine enchantments, were deceiued all nations.
- 24 And in her was found the bloud of the Prophets, & of the saints, and of all that were slain vpon the earth.



hitherto, in this chapter wee haue had set before vs, in the former verses the fall of great Babylon to be so horrible, that her louers and friendes of diuers sortes are brought in, wayling and lamenting for her. The kings weep and cry, the merchants and mariners, they howle also: their gaine, and their pleasures are gone. And now the holy Ghost on the other side doth stirre vp all the seruants of God, and calleth vpon them to reioyce at her destruction. For as on the one side they lament, so on the other side there must be reioycing. Reioyce ouer her O heauen, saith the Lord. Is her fall and destruction so requisite for the glorie of God, and the good of his Church, that euen the very heauen, the senseles creature must reioyce thereat? In deed so speake properly the heauens cannot reioyce, being voyde of understanding & sense: but to expresse the thing with the greater vehemencie, & to declare what abundant matter of reioycing there is in her fall, the heauens (euen as if it should affect the) are called vpon, in stead of those that dwell in

the heauens, or that shall possesse the: great Babel with her whoredomes defiled all. She condemned the truth, and set vp lies: she persecuted & murdered, and blasphemed the true worshippers of God. Therefore who is there that loueth the glorie of God, that esteemeth the truth, and wisheth wel to the Church, but must needes reioyce at her destruction? The holy Angels in heauen, cannot but reioyce at it. The holy Apostles and Prophets, the Martyrs, and all the Saintes, must needes be glad thereof. And so many vpon the earth as haue their conuersation in the heauens. For now shall this monster no longer oppresse them, nor yet blaspheme the truth any more. All that are good then, yea euen all that loue the glorie of God, doe greatly reioyce at the horrible destruction of Babel. And this is to be obserued, as an vndoubted principle, that looke how much the more godly any are, so much the more they reioyce at the destruction of poperie. And look how much more they reioyce, so far further they be off from pitying great Babel. Most true it is, that the godlier the man is, the more perfect in mercie and pitie, and compassion: for those be speciall partes of godlines. But this must be where pitie is to be shewed: and not where God wil haue vs to shew none. For our perfection is to agree with the blessed will of God. Now this reioycing ouer her fall, is no small increase of her torment. For where any man is in great calamitie, it somewhat easeth that men are moued with pitie and compassion towards him. And if those that beholde his miserie be so far from pitying his case, that they reioyce and triumph at the same, what an exceeding increase of sorrow doth that bring? Then when the hand of God is vpon the whore of Babel, euen vpon Rome and the Romish Church, to execute the seueritie of his wrath and vengeance, we are for our parts to take heed that we be not moued with any compassion, but are in deede to adde as much torment as we can, euen by reioycing and triumphing at her destruction. Let no man here crie out, that this is crueltie: The Lord God himselfe calleth for it at our hands, but he calleth not for crueltie. And there is a cause rendered why we should be glad and reioyce: it is in these words, for GOD hath given your iudgement on her. That is, the Lorde God hath reuenged your cause: Rome condemned the doctrine of the holy Apostles and Prophets, as wicked and hereticall: And she hath most cruellie shed the blood of the Saintes and Martyrs, because they would not be driuen from the same pure truth, to embrace her inuentions, and wicked decrees. And now whereas she so sore afflicted and oppressed the Church, the Lord for the same affliction, and will power forth his vengeance vpon her. Thus he executeth the iudgement of his Apostles and Prophets vpon her, euen the iudgement which they before denounced in the name of the Lorde, and the vengeance which is due vnto her, for all the euils which she hath committed against them, and against all that feare God, both small and great. Is not this a matter of ioye and gladnes vnto vs all? I knowe there be some which will say, O ye be malicious, ye be cruell, ye be full of spite and rayling. If the Church of Rome haue faulted, yet are wee not to loue our brethren? Are wee not to pitie those that bee in calamitie? You seeke to pull downe,

downe, to diffame, and to disgrace, what loue doth appeare in you? I answer it is no malice, it is not any want of pitie, neither is it any vncharitable rayling, to lay open their filthie abominations, euen to the full: neither is it crueltie to reioyce in their destruction: seeing God calleth for all these things at our hands: and so worthie a cause is rendered. But on the contrarie part, this we may boldly affirme, that whosoever he be which doth not reioyce at the fall and destruction of this Romish monster, euen at the destruction of Rome, and of that bloodie Antichristian kingdome, he neuer loued God, nor his truth, nor his Church, he commeth not within the compasse of these. O heauen reioyce ouer her, and ye holy Apostles & Prophets. Is it not a most euident thing by the cleere words of this text, that such as reioyce not at the grieuous iudgements of God, and at the execution of his seuerer vengeance vpon Rome, and the Romish Idolaters, haue no part in the heauens, nor with the holy Apostles and Prophets? Ye haue many men which care not at all, whether the dominion of the Pope stand or fall, these be indifferent, these be meere worldlings, not regarding the worship of God, nor the saluation of mens soules, being children of this world, which haue their portion in this life. These are not here called vpon to reioyce: when he saith, Reioyce ouer her O heauen. But if it had been said, reioyce ouer her ye inhabitants of the earth and of the sea, it might concerne them. But they haue receiued no such harme by Antichristes kingdome. Againe, there bee many, which either for gaine, or else made drunken and besotted with the wine of her whoredome, do entirely loue the whore: these are none of the companie here called vpon to reioyce at her fall: for they mourne for her in their heartes. They long to see her set vp againe in her former pompe and iolitic, they wish to see the day that she might preuaile against all those which doe inueigh against her with the word of God, and that doe bring her vnto shame and contempt. They wish to see them all rooted out, and that all againe with one consent would receiue the golden cup, and drinke whatsoeuer the harlot doth put into it. They wish that she might sit as a queene againe, and as the ladie of the world abounding in all riches, delicacie and pleasures. Then this, O heauen reioyce, is spoken of another companie, whose cause is iudged and reuenged. And beloued if we be not of this societie, woe be vnto vs, we haue no part in the heauens, we haue no fellowship with the holy Apostles and Prophets. Therefore brethren let vs consider what an horrible monster Rome hath been against the truth, and reioyce in the free passage of the Gospell, which shall throw her downe: yea, let vs doe what we can to set this holy worke forward. Hauing thus called vpon all the seruants of God, to triumphe with gladnes for her destruction, euen because God executeth his vengeance vpon her for all the euill she hath done to his people: Now the spirit of the Lord declareth that shee shall neuer recouer herselfe, nor be restored againe from this destruction. The Papists doe worke apace in all lands, and aduenture themselves in most desperate manner, to recouer againe the credit of poperie, and to set vp againe the dignitie & the power of their Pope, and the glorie of their Church and Citie: and their bolde en-

terprises doe make many, euen to doubt that they will againe one day preuaile. But surely we are to make full reckoning, that although here and there they may support for a time some ruinous partes of their rotten frame, yet doe what they can it shall downe vpon their heads, and come to vtter desolation. For marke what followeth here in the text: and yee shall see that all things to the ende of this chapter, are onely for this purpose, euen to shew her vtter desolation? It is first saide, that a mightie Angell tooke vp a stone, like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, with such violence shall the great citie Babylon bee cast, and shall be found no more. Here the Lord declareth by a forcible signe, that the citie and kingdome of Antichrist shall be cast deepe into perdition, & shall lie ouerwhelmed and drowned in the same for euer and euer. The signe is so cleere of it selfe, hauing the wordes of the Angell to expound it, that there needeth little to be said for to open the meaning: but yet somewhat shall not bee amisse. And first ye may call to minde, that as Babel in old time did oppresse the Church, being a most wicked idolatrous citie: so Rome in this Prophecie for the like qualities is named Babylon. Secondly, in as much as Rome surmounteth in all abominations that auncient Babel, she is called not onely Babylon, but great Babylon. Thirdly, the phrases of speech, and the signes which the Prophets vsed, to declare the destruction and desolation of that old Babel, are here alluded vnto in the destruction of Rome. The men of Iuda were caried away captiue to Babel: the Lorde by the Prophet Ieremie doth promise, that he will deliuer them, and bring them backe againe from that bondage and captiuitie, threatening destruction vnto that proude Babel. And Ieremie hauing written in a booke all the euill that should come vpon Babel: euen all these things that are written against Babel: he said to Seraiah, when thou comest vnto Babel, and shalt see and reade all these words: then shalt thou say, O Lord thou hast spoken against this place, to destroy it, that none should remaine in it, neither man nor beast, but that it should be desolate for euer. And when thou hast made an end of reading this booke, thou shalt binde a stone to it, and cast it in the midst of Euphrates, and shalt say, thus shall Babel be drowned, and shall not rise from the euill that I will bring vpon her, although they wearie themselves, Ierem. 51.

This is the type, & these are the words vsed against olde Babel: and now consider how that agreeth with the same which is here set downe: and yee shall see that the differences are onely in this, that all things are here with greater force of iudgement, to expresse as it were a deeper vengeance, and a more heauie and vnrecoverable destruction. First there is a man, here is a mightie Angell. The man taketh a stone which indeed will sincke in the waters: here the Angell taketh vp a great stone like a millstone: there the stone is cast into the riuer: here into the deepe sea. All these doe amplifie the matter if ye looke vpon them. To represent that Babel in Chaldea should sincke downe into misery and destruction & not rise vp againe, but lie ouerwhelmed, a stone is cast into the riuer which doth sincke downe to the bottome and lieth there. To figure out a more

more horrible destruction of Rome and of the romish sinagogue, which for their most horrible abominations farre passing that other, is in a mysterie called great Babylon, here is an Angell with great might, who taketh vp a very heauy stone and with violence casteth it into the deepe sea, where it sincketh downe to the bottome, and lieth couered, past all meanes and helpe of man to fetch it vp againe. So shall the romish Babel euen with violence be cast into the deepe gulfes of perdition and desolation, and shall neuer rise vp againe. It is in the Prophet Ieremie, that Babel should so be drowned or sincke as that stone, and neuer rise againe, although they should wearie themselves. If a little stone cast into the riuer did figure so much, being cast in by a man: shall we thinke that Rome shall lift vp her head againe whose drowning, ouerwhelming, and sincking deepe into perdition, is resembled by a great stone like vnto a millstone cast with violence by a mightie Angell into the deepe sea? Let the papists wearie themselves, as indeed their labours are exceeding great, and their enterprises desperate, yet they shall neuer set her vp againe. She is cast downe deepe with violence like a very heauie stone into the bottome of the sea of Gods vengeance. Indeed Rome standeth yet, and the poperie is not quite downe, but they are disclosed, and their credit is cracked, their power decayeth, and so this thing is begun, & the time draweth on when it shall be fully accomplished. He that had beheld the power, the maiestie, the pompe, the riches and the estimation of that church about some foure-score yeares past, and looke vpon it now, should see a wonderfull alteration. It seemed then to be without all danger of being shaken, the Emperor and the kings with al their might stood vp to maintaine it. If any man did vtter but a word against the vsurped power of the pope, there was a solemne calling vpon Peter, and Paul for helpe against him, and it was thought he must downe to hell without speedie repentance. Who could abide the terror of their curse? Did not the kings tremble and quake for feare at it? And now he may cast forth his lightnings and thunder (I meane the pope,) like a terrible god, Who doth regard the same? Do we not see that all is but an illusion, and an emptie shadow or visor? If the that terrible bloody kingdom be so farre come downe, beyond all thought and expectation of man: why should we doubt, but that in the time which God hath appoynted, it shall be vtterly cast downe, and for euer?

Now followeth the description of her eternall desolation, which is by deniall of those things which are in cities inhabited: We know that rich and mightie cities are full of myrth and iolitic: There be harpers, and other musitians, there be pipers and trumpetters. These are denyed vnto great Babel, it is sayd, that there shall neuer bee the voice or sound of these heard any more in her at all. The myrth then of Rome is come to an ende. She hath beene full of these euen as the Lady of the world, wanting no pleasant delights. There hath been mirth vpon myrth, and all sweet melodie: but now farewell all this for euer and euer. She hath raigned ouer the world, she hath mustred her armies, and the stately sound of trumpets hath beene heard in her: but now all shall be husht. Here is

one note then of vtter desolation. Then to another: And no craftsman of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee. A citie may stand without melodie or pleasant musicke: but it hath not been scene. Put case it might, yet this cutteth downe Rome vtterly, and sheweth her extreame desolation, that there shall neuer be found in her any artificer of what trade soeuer. Can any citie stand without artificers? Who shall build and repayre their houses? who shall furnish them with household stuffe? what shall they doe for their apparell and other necessities? In Babel there shall be none of all these, therefore she shall not be inhabited, but lye desolate for euer. Vnlesse we will imagine that a citie may stand, and the people liue in the same, without the vse of those things which the artificers of all trades doe make and vtter. It may bee some kind of trade being wanting, people might make shift to liue: and therefore it is sayd here, that in great Babylon there shall not bee any one artificer of what trade soeuer, which sheweth her vtter desolation.

Then further it is added, And the sound of a mill shall be heard no more at all in thee. This is yet a further note of an vtter destruction. Of all necessities the people must haue bread, or els how shall they liue. If they haue bread, it must come this way, that they haue mills to grinde their corne of which their bread is to be made. And he sayth that in Rome, which is great Babel, there shall neuer bee heard any more at all the sound of a mill. There shall be no more grinding, there shall be no more baking: who then shall dwell there? The Popes, the proud Cardinals and other great prelates, as the Emperours before them, haue long time been pampered and fed in her with the finest flower of wheate. Many others of great estate haue liued daintily within her palaces. The millars and the bakers haue gayned much, and liued euen like gentlemen, through the abundance of her delicacie: all this shall be quite cut off, the sound of a mill shall no more bee heard in her at all. Desolate then, destroyed, wasted, and not inhabited of any, shall she lye for euer.

Here is yet further added, And the light of a candle shall shine no more in thee at all. God giueth vs the cleere and comfortable light of the Sunne by day, by which men see to walke, to busie themselves, and to performe all their works and necessarie affaires of this life. When the night commeth, and darknes ouerspreadeth the face of the earth, then are they faine to vse the artificiall light of fire and candle. Without these they can see to doe nothing, they cannot well stirre about, all is dolefull and dumpish, and therefore wee see that the vse of the candle is very necessarie and great, in all cities, townes and villages. Hereupon it doth followe, that seeing the light of a candle shall neuer shine any more in Rome, that Rome shall lye desolate and forsaken for euer. There shall bee nothing but horreur and darknes, none shall dwell there to shut vp his windowe by night for to light a candle.

There is yet one thing more, and that is, And the voyce of the bridegrome and of the bride, shall be heard no more in thee at all. If cities be neuer so populous, yet if there be no generation, they must needs in short time come to be desolate and emptye.

emptye. For men doe weare away, and continuance is by a new supplie that ariseth: As Salomon saith, One generation passeth away, and another commeth, but the earth abideth for euer, Ecclesiast. i. Well, to shew that Babylon shall not be inhabited, it is here sayd, the voyce of the bridegrome and of the bride, shall be no more heard in thee at all. There shall be no more marriage in Rome, there shall be no more procreation of children, which may succede and inherite the houses and lands and roomes of their fathers. In all these things then Rome shall be cast downe and layd desolate. There shall be none to inhabite, there shall be no buildings, there shall bee nothing but vtter and horrible desolation: These bee very heauie things denounced against so great, so mightie, and so glorious a citie. And least any might thinke that here is ouermuch rigour and seueritie, the holy Ghost againe repeateth briefly the causes of this destruction, that all men may see that she hath deserued no lesse. There bee three causes set downe, the first is in these words, For thy marchants were the great men of the earth. What fault is there in this, that her marchants were growne so great? Is the greatnes of the marchants so foule and so detestable a thing? Verely the greatnes of marchants is not simply in it selfe, if we consider the matter generally, to be condemned, but here in the Church of Rome it dooth argue a most hainous offence: And that is, that they in the poperie set all things to sale, euen Christ himselfe and all holy things, and the soules of men. They had a number of false wares wherewith they deceiued the people: they turned all into a very marte. The holy Ghost noteth their abominable filthie lucre in a word, when he sayth, thy marchants were the great men of the earth. All that professe the feare of God in simplicitie, doe abhorre, and crye out vpon that buying and selling of all things in the poperie. What infinite treasures did the Popes themselves heape vp by many things that they sold? And it is wonderfull to consider the prices which they set vpon their wares. They would and did for money dispense, and giue pardon for all offences. It is most horrible to be spoken. The Cardinals, the Bishops, the Abbots, the Monkes, the Friars and the priests, with sundrie other sorts, had their packes full of wares which they made money of, and in such plentie, that many of them did grow exceeding rich. Maruile not therefore that here is noted as one cause of the vengeance of God vpon the Romish Church, that her marchants were growne to be the great men of the earth: seeing her sale and marchandize of all things hath been such, that we may wonder that the Lord hath spared them so long.

Then followeth the second cause of this vengeance vpon her, in these wordes, And with thine enchantment were deceiued all nations. This is a wonderfull abomination, which hath drawne the heauie indignation of almighty God vpon her, that this Rome, and this Romish synagogue hath played the witch, and by her witchcraft hath bewitched all nations, and seduced them to commit whoredome with her. The Popes of Rome and their clergie haue set vp and maintained their vsurped power, with lyes, with sleights, and with the illusions of the diuell: and that the nations and kingdoms of the earth did beleue them, the holy Ghost cal-

leth it a witcherie. And verely if Satan had not euen bewitched the minds of men, how could they haue doted in such sort vpon so foule a strumpet? Looke whatsoeuer she offered in her golden cuppe, of errors, of heresies, of superstition, and of idolatrie, or of any spirituall whoredomes, wherewith she did corrupt and pollute the holy worship of God, the seduced and bewitched nations did receiue and drinke vpon the same greedily. O the filthie whoredomes and most foule abominations, into which she drew the people, hauing so bewitched their mindes. And now shall she for the same, receiue her iudgement, and beare the burthen of the vengeance of God, which shall destroy and lay her desolate for euer. Then we see two causes of her extreame miserie: the first, that they set all things to sale: the second, that they bewitched with the illusions of Satan, the mindes of the people in all kingdomes, and seduced them to the worshippe of diuels: and now the third cause remaineth which is not the least, which concerneth their crueltie against the holy seruants of God, whose blood they haue shed. It is exprest in these words, And in her was found the blood of the Prophets, and of the Saints, and of all that were slaine vpon the earth. Is not here a sufficient cause of destruction? Is not here a bloudie citie? For when he sayth, that the blood of the Prophets and of the Saints was found in her, it is not to be taken as the papists doe glorie, that they haue the treasure of the Church, they haue the blood and the merits of the martyrs, which for money they bestowe, but that indeede Rome hath shed the blood of Gods seruants, and is guiltie thereof. In that sense he saith the blood is found in her, it is vpon her, she is defiled with it, the Lorde God hath sought and found it out. And now since the coming of Christ, what citie can the papists shew vnto vs that hath shed the blood of the Prophets and Saints, but Rome? In olde time, who shed the blood of so many thousand Christians in all lands, but the Emperours of Rome? Was not all done by their authoritie? The papists themselues do confesse this, for it is so cleere that it cannot be denyed. In these latter dayes, the slaughters and persecutions that haue been for the Gospell in all lands, by whose power and authoritie haue they been, but of the popes of Rome? Rome shed the blood of old, Rome doth shed the blood in these dayes. Rome therefore is great Babel here spoken of, that shall bee destroyed for murdering the Saints of God. Other

Babell so guiltie of blood, they can shew none. And thus wee see the causes of her destruction, the Lord Iesus for his chosen sake, bring it speedily to passe. Amen.

The



The 41. Sermon.

CHAP. 19.

- 1 *And after these things, I heard a great voyce of a great multitude in heauen, saying, Halleluiah, saluation, and glorie, and honour, and power, bee to the Lord our God:*
- 2 *Because his iudgements are true and righteous, for he hath condemned the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath auenged the blood of his seruants shed by her hand.*
- 3 *And againe they said Halleluiah, and the smoake of her torments rose vp for euermore.*
- 4 *And the foure and twentie Elders, and the foure beasts fell downe, and worshipped God that sate on the throne, saying, Amen, Halleluiah.*
- 5 *Then a voyce came out from the throne, saying, Praise our God all his seruants, and yet that feare him, both small and great.*
- 6 *And I heard like the voyce of a great multitude, and as the voyce of many waters, and as the voyce of strong thundrings, saying, Halleluiah: for our Lord God almightie hath reigned.*
- 7 *Let vs be glad and reioyce, and giue glorie to him: for the marriage of the Lambe is come, and his wife hath made her selfe readie.*
- 8 *And to her was granted, that she should be arrayed with pure fine linnen and shining: for the fine linnen is the righteousness of the Saints.*
- 9 *Then hee sayd vnto mee, Write, Blessed are they which are called vnto the Lambes supper. And he sayd vnto me, These words of God are true.*
- 10 *And I fell before his feete to worship him: but he sayd vnto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow seruant, and of thy brethren which haue the testimonie of Iesus. Worship God: for the testimonie of Iesus is the spirite of prophcie.*



E haue scene in the former chapter the destruction of great Babel painted out, and the lamentation, howling, and mourning that her louers and friends doe make for her. Now in this chapter, in that which I haue read vnto you, here is set foorth on the contrary part, the ioy, the reioycing, the triumph, the praying, and the magnifying of the name of God by al the heauenly companies of Angels & of blessed soules, and by all the faithfull vpon earth, for her fall and destruction, in that God hath iudged

iudged her. Her destruction is taken heauily of them that loue her: but most ioyfull it is vnto all that loue God, and his glory. And that we may know how the holy companies in heauen are affected with the downfall of this filthie harlot, all is by vision opened and reuealed vnto Iohn, and hee testifieth it in writing vnto vs, all things in order. This is no small fauour, these be not trifles, that the Lorde doth reueale vnto vs, what the heavenly companies do. Let vs be attentiu that wee may ioyne with them.

There be thousand thousands of holy Angels, as the holy scripture doth teach, there be many soules of the Patriarks and other holy men, and for this cause Saint Iohn heareth a great voice of a great multitude, for all ioyne together in praising the high God. And although they bee manie, yet is it not a confused voice which they vtter, but a most sweete and pleasant harmonie, in which hee vnderstandeth euery word, as well as if the voice were vttered onely by one. This is miraculous, euen to teach, that the praises of God are set forth in most excellent and pure manner, without all confusion, among the heavenly companies. The first word that they vtter is *Halleluiab*. It is an hebrue worde, which is compounded of *Hallelu*, which is, praise ye; and *iah*, which is God. Whereby ye may see that they doe first incite and stirre vp each other to praise and magnifie the Lord. For this is the effect of true zeale, where the creature loueth God indeed with some integritie, not onely to glorifie him, but also to call vpon all others to do the same. They all crie out, *Halleluiab*, that is, praise ye the Lord. And then they vtter his praise thus, Saluation, and glorie, and honour, and power, bee to the Lorde our GOD. Heere be foure words in which they set forth his praise. In the first, they ascribe vnto him saluation. For he is the onely Sauour, all health and saluation cometh from him alone. Both men and Angels haue their saluation from him. There is no creature which doth saue it selfe. And here the speciall occasion is, that hee doth saue his chosen seruants, euen his whole Church, from the tyrannie of Antichrist, and from the cruell dragon.

Then next they ascribe vnto him glory and honour. For who is worthie of glory and honour but he alone? There be many glorious and honorable things in his Angels, and in his Saints, but they haue them not of themselues, he is the fountaine they haue receiued them from him, and vnto him is the praise, the glory and the honour to be giuen for the same. The papists are all in worshipping, honouring, and glorifying the creatures: and vaine glorious men stand vpon their owne worthines, and couet to be magnified: but the heavenly company is whole in glorifying God. Let vs (beloued) eschew such vaine glorie, let vs flie from such abominable popish sacriledge, and ioyne with this heavenly companie in glorifying and praising our God.

Lastly, they ascribe the power to the Lord God in this heavenly praise. There be creatures which are strong and mighty in power: but in God we liue, we moue, and haue our being, as Saint Paul teacheth, Act. 17. so that all power is from him. Looke whatsoeuer great thing is done by any might, (as here the casting downe of great Babel) whatsoeuer the instruments be that he vseth, either men or Angels, the

the whole glory redoundeth to God, in as much as they haue all their mightinesse from him. This praise being thus sounded forth to God, there is ioyned therewith, and rendred a cause, in these wordes: For true and righteous are his iudgements: for he hath condemned the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath auenged the bloud of his seruants shed by her hand. Is not here great cause why his glorious praise should bee sounded forth? Hee is the iudge of the whole world, he hath threatned seuerer vengeance against all impietie, and in time he doth execute the same, thereby manifesting that his iudgements are true, and shall not faile. Hee doth oftentimes deferre them, but in the ende they come. Moreover, when his wrath is poured forth, it seemeth to flesh and bloud, to be with ouermuch rigour and seueritie: but all the holy Angels and Saints doe plainly behold, and so they proclaime, that his iudgements vpon the wicked are righteous & iust. The torments indeed which they suffer & endure are most grieuous, but no more then they haue deserued, & that doth all this heavenly companie acknowledge. True and righteous (say they) are his iudgements. If any thing do trouble vs when either we behold the heauie wrath of God almightie vpon the wicked, or remember what he doth threaten against all the workers of iniquitie: call to minde how the whole heavenly companies doe subscribe to his iudgements as true and righteous: and hold this as a most firme and vndoubted principle, that if any thing doe seeme otherwise vnto vs, it is because we are corrupt and blind, and that when we are fully set free from all burthen of corruption, we shall iudge euen as the holy angels doe. We can not now see into the righteous waies of our Lorde God, as wee shall then: and therefore we must now for the time rest in this, that wee are sure there is no vnrighteousnes with God. Here wee must note then further, that the whole heavenly companies doe laud and magnifie the Lord God, for his iudgements: For he doth shew forth his glory, not in the riches of his mercy alone which he extendeth vnto many of his creatures, but also in the seueritie of his iudgements. His vspeakable glory doth vtter it selfe on both sides: and all his holy ones do proclaime it.

And then they come to the particular, saying, For he hath condemned the great whore. All this magnifying then of God, is for condemning and destroying Rome and the Romish Synagogue: for that is great Babel the mother of whoredomes and abominations of the earth. And here they recite two generall heads of her impieties, for which the Lord God in iustice doth execute this vengeance vpon her. The one is, that she corrupted the earth with her fornication, which hath been sundrie times mentioned: because it is a thing most detestable before the Lord. His word and the true light thereof was spread by his faithfull seruants faire and neere among the nations: his pure worship was set vp and imbraced of many. Rome vnder the persecuting Emperours a long time did impugne it, but could not preuaile. Afterward rose vp the vsurped power of the popes, and by them this whorish citie bewitched and seduced the nations and kingdomes of the earth, and led them into idolatrie and false religion, euen into spiritual whoredome: and this is it which they say, that shee had corrupted the earth with her fornication. Is she not worthy

worthie to bee destroyed with horrible destruction? Is there any pitie to bee taken vpon her, which hath corrupted so many great kingdomes with her fornication? Yea are not all the seruants of God to reioyce at the destruction of such an one? It is no malice, it is no want of charitie, to wish the vtter downfall and subversion of Rome, and of those Romish Antichristian lawes, yea and of so manie wicked popish enemies of the Church and Gospell, as in obstinate malice persecute the truth: vnlesse we will affirme (which is most wicked) that the holy angels and blessed Saints are in malice and doe want charitie: seeing all these doe glorifie and praise God for the same. What greater perfection in the creature, then to be like them? Are wee not taught to pray, Thy will bee done in earth, as it is in heauen?

And now marke the second generall head which they recite of her impieties? And hath (say they) auenged the blood of his seruants, shed by her hand. It was matter euen enough to moue all creatures that loue the glory and truth of God, to be glad and to praise him for the destruction of so monstrous a whore, which had corrupted the earth with her fornication: but yet here is further matter as ye see added: and that is her great crueltie in shedding the blood of Gods seruants. Doth not the innocent blood of so many thousands of holy Martyrs cruelly murdered by the heathen Emperours of Rome in former times, and of latter times by the Popes, call and crie aloud in the eares of the Lord for vengeance vpon that bloudie citie? Is it not euen the office of God the righteous iudge to bee auenged? Is it not then our part to wish for the time in which it shall bee accomplished, and when it is come, together with all Gods holy seruants in most reioicing manner to glorifie his holy name for it? The Lorde open our eyes more and more, that we may see cleerely the filthie whoredomes of Rome, how shee hath corrupted the earth with the same, and how horrible the crueltie is that shee exercised vpon the true worshippers of God, that so we may more earnestly euilong to see the wrath of God poured forth vpon her in full measure: and with these heavenly companies, ascribe saluation, glory, honour, and power, to the righteous iudge for the same.

It followeth, and againe they said, *Halleluiab*. At the first entrance of their praise which they offer vp to God, they beganne with *Halleluiab*, declaring their vehement zeale which they haue to set forth his glory, in that they stir vp and prouoke each other to the same. And now when they haue ended, they vtter *Halleluiab* againe. What doth this teach vs? It doth teach vs that the holy Angels and all the blessed companie in heauen do neuer cease praising and glorifying the Lord God. Their loue, their zeale, and their delight neuer diminisheth, but when they haue vttered his praise, they call for it againe, saying, praise ye the Lord. They haue neuer done, they neuer waxe wearie, they neuer slacke. Our case while we liue here is far differing, for partly through blindness, wee see not how worthie hee is of all glorie and praise: and partly through the remnants of corruption which remaine, wee haue small delight to magnifie him, and we doe soone waxe wearie. But when we shall be made perfect like to the angels in heauen, then shall it bee otherwise with

vs.

vs. For then shall the whole ioy and delight of our heart be to glorifie God. And that wherein the creature doth take delight, it doth not waxe wearie of. Maruaile not therefore when ye heare in the scripture, that the holy angels cease not day and night, saying, holy, holy, holy, Lord God almightie: for it is with exceeding delight. There is nothing so sweete and pleasant, there is nothing so full of ioy, as it shall be vnto vs to glorifie God without ceasing and intermission. Wee shall with full affection sound out *Halleluiab*, saluation, and glorie, and honour, and power, be to the Lord our God, for his iudgements are true and righteous, and his mercie endureth for euer, and when we haue done, we shall still returne and say, *Halleluiab*. This shall be our whole delight, as we are heretofore taught, when he saith, and againe they said, *Halleluiab*.

Then there came a voice (saith he) out from the throne, saying, praise our God all his seruants, and ye that feare him, both small and great. This voice commeth out from the throne, but yet not vttered by him that sitteth vpon the throne, but by some of those glorious Angels which are sayd to be in the midst of the throne & round about the throne chap. 4. The voice, as ye see, saith, praise our God, so that the vtterer therof ioyneth himselfe with those whom he calleth vpon as a seruant of the same God: which doth not agree to any of the persons in the blessed trinitie. It is a most sweet voice, mouing and stirring vp all the seruants of God to praise him, euen all that do feare him, of what estate, or degree, or condition so euer they be: for it is said, both small and great. God almightie is so worthy of all praise and glory, and it is so much the duty of all creatures to sound it forth, that here is no stay nor intermission. For vpon the vttering of this sweet voice, it followeth, that S. Iohn heard like a voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of strong thunders, saying, *Halleluiab*, for our Lord God almighty hath raigned. Then this voice was not vttered in vaine, it was not without effect, for the multitude of Gods seruants sound forth such a strong praise, or so mightily stir vp each other to praise him, that S. Iohn compareth it to the voice of many waters, and vnto the voice of strong thunders. These are mighty voices: but it may be said, where are these heard vpon earth? where doth so great a multitude so strongly praise the Lord, and with so mighty courage and delight? If a man looke vpon the multitudes which are vpon the face of the earth, he shall heare them swear and curse, and abuse the name of God generally. He shall find few that with vehement affection do praise him. Yea if wee respect the publike assemblies, in which they sing psalmes, and praises to God, the greater part do sing with the mouth and outward tune, and not with the melodie of the heart. And it is not the outward voice that ascendeth to God, but the sincere affection of the mind: when men with a true faith, and seruient loue of the glory of God, do sound forth his praise. If these be thin sown, where is this multitude which make this thundering noise? I answer, that albeit the true worshippers of God be scattered thin vpon the earth, yet as they meet in the vnity of faith, so their praises do meet together and ascend vp vnto the Lord God. The voice commeth from

Bb

the

the throne which willett vs to praise our God. Let vs looke vpon the worthines and glory of his praise. Let vs delight therein. And although we light vpon few in cōparison which do feare & honor him, yet let it not discourage vs, as though our praises should bee weake and slender: but know that they meet together with the praises of all the saints, and ascend vp so strongly as it were with the voice of mighty thunders. This doth also teach vs what an acceptable thing it is to God that his seruants do praise him. He is to be worshipped, to be honored, to be glorified, and to be praised aboue all: and no greater thing is there for vs to do. It is the end for which we are created & redeemed, that we should set forth his glorious praise: and it is our glorie and felicity, as ye may see in the reaso which is added in these words, For our Lord god almighty hath raigned. If God by his almighty power getteth the victory ouer all his enemies & doth raigne, it is that which we are to reioice and to glorie in, and to praise him for. And why? Because wee are partakers of the same. He breaketh down and destroyeth the power of the dragon, of Antichrist, of sinne and of death, euen the power of all our enemies. He doth draw vs out of their hands, from vnder their tyranny, yea euen from endles misery, & listeth vs vp into glory, to raigne with his most blessed son. Is not this a kingdom of grace? Is not this a ioyfull kingdom? Are we not to praise & magnifie him for the same, seeing it is to our endles ioy and felicity? The whole church is taught by our sauiour Christ to pray with ardent desire, Let thy kingdome come. Tread down O Lord al thine enemies, break down the kingdom of the diuell: raigne ouer the mighty tyrants and subdue them. Let them not tyrannize any longer ouer thy chosen, but aduance and lift them vp out of all oppressions into glory, that thy glory may be magnified aboue all. Being taught to pray thus, as for the chiefeft matters of all, which we are to long for, when God bringeth them to passe, shall not all honor and praise, and glory be sounded forth vnto him in heaven and earth, both by men and Angels? Then ye see here is great cause rendered of his praise. So long as Satan hath a kingdome, and so long as his ministers euen Antichrist and others do raige, there is much dishonor to the truth, and great oppression to the church, wherby the seruants of God are cast into heauines and sorrow: When the Lord God destroyeth the power of these tyrants, so that they can not hurt any more, then is he said to receiue his kingdome, which commeth with such a-bundance of blessings vpon all that feare him, that there is exceeding ioy and exultation, and praising of the high name of God. And therefore they say, let vs be glad and reioyce, & giue glory to him, for the mariage of the lambe is come, and his wife hath made her selfe ready. Here is as ye see, more particularly set forth the matter of ioy, and of glorifying God, vnder the mariage of Christ and his church. He hath betrothed himselfe vnto her of old, she is his spouse, as Salomon plentifully setteth forth in his song: and now commeth the time to solemnize the mariage. It hath been the maner of old, both in Israel, and among the gentiles, that first for a time there was a contract, a promise of matrimonie of each party to other, and then after that a day was appoynted, in which they

did

did celebrate the mariage: So long as the church is in this world, she is but betrothed to Christ, and then is the mariage when he taketh her vnto him into the possession of the heauenly glory, which shalbe at the day of iudgement. For so soon as the mariage is celebrated, the wife entereth with her husband to be partaker of all that he possesseth. And therefore it is here said that the mariage of the lambe is come. Shee shall now no more, nor any of her children, be vnder affliction being receiued into the heauenly inheritance. The mariage of the lambe is come. He redeemed her with his blood, he hath washed her, & sanctified her & made her a glorious church to him selfe by the same his blood: & therefore S. Iohn calleth it the mariage of the Lamb: for al this he wrought as the vnspotted lamb of God sacrificed vpon the crosse, which taketh away the sins of the world. Then further, it hath been euer the manner when a mariage was to be solemnized, that the bride doth prepare & deck her selfe with Jewels, & ornaments, & costly apparel: & accordingly it is said here, that the Lambs wife hath made her selfe ready. We must needs confesse that this is a thing most necessary, that this bride should be decked & beautified: for her husband is most glorious & pure. There must be no spot or blemish, there must be no impurity, nor no deformity, but all pure and glorious as it is meet for the wife of such an husband. The decking & the ornaments wherewith she maketh her selfe ready are not such as the brides here in this world do vse, which are Jewels and ornaments of gold, of siluer, of pearles, and of silks and precious garments, and of other like earthly and corruptible things: but they be heauenly, and incorruptible. And least we should be ignorant what her ornaments bee, they are set forth in the next words which are these, & to her it was graunted that shee should be arraied with pure fine linnen and shining. This is her decking wherewith shee maketh her selfe ready. It may be sayd, is this the most precious and the most glorious attire, or is this incorruptible? Pure linnen and shining which in old time they had, was very precious, but the brides of this world also had it, and it was corruptible. And there be other ornaments more costly. I answer, that ye must not take this literally, for this pure shining linnen is but a borrowed speech to represent an other thing. And so he doth expound it, saying, the fine linnen is the righteousness of the saints. It is not then such fine linnen as is made and worn in this world. It is heauenly, it is incorruptible, it is glorious. But what is this righteousness, or iustifications of the saints? We know how the scripture teacheth that we are iustified or made righteous by faith in Christ. Our sins are washed away in his blood, his righteousness is imputed vnto vs. And from this faith there proceed holy works which do declare the same, & in that sense are sayd to iustifie. This teacheth vs how carefully we ought to prepare our selues against the coming of our Lord Iesus, that we may be found holy and chaste and pure before him, to come to this mariage. Now the Angell willett S. Iohn to write, that they are blessed which are called to the lambs supper. Here are still borrowed speeches, to set forth the matter. It was the vse at a mariage to make a great feast at night: and therefore all the heauenly ioyes vnto which Christ re-

ceiue his church, are set forth vnder this word, the lambs supper. He maketh them this feast at his mariage. This mariage feast replenished with all heavenly dainties lasteth for euer. There shalbe ioyes & delights world without end. At y^e mariage of his sonne a man of dignity & wealth, will do all y^e he can for to entertain the guests in the best maner. The kings of the earth then shew their glory & magnificence: and therefore the kingdome of heauen is likened to a king that married his sonne Math. 22. How great is the feast of a king at the mariage of his sonne? What roialtie is there? And what good thing is wanting that can be gotten for money? How great then is the banquet of the most high God, the king of all kings, & in comparison of whom all the mightiest princes are but beggars, at the mariage of his sonne? The liuing God is an infinite treasure of all good things, the abundance wherof shal now be shewed forth in this great supper: and therefore S. Iohn is first willed to write, that they be blessed which are called to the lambs supper. And for confirmation hee saith further vnto Iohn, these words of God are true. Here is a wonderfull great thing set before vs. Let vs take heed we deprive not our selues, and be found without the wedding garment. O beloued, labor for the holy faith, to be sanctified & made meet to come to this heavenly supper. Despise all these worldly vanities, and vain delights, in comparison of it. For here is the honor, here is the life, here is the ioy and eternall felicity, and the God of truth hath promised them. Beleeue God, for his words, as the Angel saith here to Iohn, are true. Neuer doubt but that there is such a mariage, and such a supper prepared, & the happy guests shalbe called therunto.

In the next words, S. Iohn doth record a fault which he himselfe did commit: namely how he fell down before the feete of the Angel, to worship him. Where we shal see how also the angel doth forbid him, shewing reason why he may not in any wise doe so. For when S. Iohn hath told what he did, & what he purposed, as that he fell downe before his feete to worship him: he sheweth also what the Angel sayd, as thus, See thou do it not, I am thy fellow seruant, and of thy brethren which haue the testimonie of Iesus, worship God: for the testimonie of Iesus, is the spirit of prophecie. Vpon this scripture we are first to note, that it is for the speciall instruction and good of the whole Church, that S. Iohn reporteth his owne fault. For he yee well assured that where the holy scripture recordeth the errors, the slippes, and the falles, of the most excellent seruantes of God, it is for singular purpose, and for the necessarie instruction, and great good of the whole Church, euen of al Gods faithful seruants. We may first consider here how easie the fall is vnto Idolatrie, when so notable a seruant of God as S. Iohn doth slippe. Hee meant not to worship the Angel as God, but being rauished with the glory of the Angel which he beholdeth, he forgetteth himself, and is ready to offer vnto him some diuine worship: As we see Act. 10. Howe when the Angel of God had willed Cornelius to send for Peter, and sayde hee should tell him what he should doe, that when Peter came, he fell at his feete to doe that which is not to be done vnto any creature. The heathen people being

left

left to walke in the vanitie of their owne minde, did worship wheresoeuer any diuine giste did appeare in any creature: And this led them to make many gods. And is it not to be wondred at in blinde men, when this great Apostle at the brightnes and glory of the Angel forgetteth himselfe? The papists in the church of Rome haue fallen vnto as grosse idolatrie as euer did the heathen, if not grosser: for wheresoeuer any excellent diuine gift hath been in any creature, or imagined to haue beene, there vnto that creature they offer diuine worship, which belongeth onely to God. They worship Saints and Angels, they pray vnto them, they dedicate Churches and Temples vnto them: they make them mediators, patrons, and defendours. They bowe downe also vnto images, and dead blocks, they make supplication vnto them, which, as the prophet saith, haue eares and heare not, eyes and see not, &c. They doe also worship reliques and dead bones, of such as either haue beene holy men, or at the least whome they haue so esteemed. Should I stand here to reckon all things which they worship with diuine honour which is due to God alone? I should bee very tedious vnto you: for how many sortes of base creatures thinke ye I might rehearse of wood, and of iron and such like, before I come to the skinning breeches of Frier Francis which they doe worship?

Well, behold now in the second place (after ye haue obserued howe easily men fall into idolatrie, as to worship creatures in which there appeare diuine graces) what a singular goodnes and prouidence of God here sheweth it selfe towards his Church. This prophecie was giuen to instruct and to arme the true seruants of God, against the idolatrous kingdome of Antichrist, that they might not be drawen away from his pure and holy worship, vnto the worshipping of creatures. S. Iohn that receiue it as the holy seruant of God, and as the pen-man of the holy Ghost, doth slippe, and is ready to worship a creature. Here recordeth this his error vnto all posteritie, to take notice of it. And not onely that, but he sheweth also how the Angel did forbid him, and shew reason why neither he nor any other might do it. Behold herein (as I said) the singular goodnes and prouidence of God, that the slippe of his seruant should be an occasion euen in that booke which painteth out Antichrist, to cut downe all Antichristian worship: for by the words of the Angel vnto Iohn, all the whole poperie is ouerthrowen which is in adoring creatures. For if it be not lawfull to bow downe and to worship so glorious an Angel, then is it not lawfull to worship any saint. If it be not lawfull to worship those holy and excellent creatures, then is it not lawfull for to worship things which are baser, as images of gold and of silver, of brasse, of wood and of stone: nor all those reliques and rotten bones. For it is a most cleere thing, that if any creature may be worshipped with religious worship, they be those which are the highest in dignitie and glory. But the words of this glorious Angel doe shew plainly that he may not in any wise bee worshipped. See (saith he) that thou doe it not. And he doeth not onely thus forbid him, but sheweth a reason which is in these wordes. I am thy fellowe seruant, and of thy brethren which haue the testimonie of Iesus. Worship God.

O worthy speech to set vp the worship of God alone, which the wicked idolaters doe cauill at, but can neuer darken the cleernes thereof. Thus it standeth, no fellow seruant is to haue that giuen vnto him by his fellow seruants which is due to their Lord: Then there is but one Lord ouer all, which is God. All his creatures, yea euen the highest, those glorious angels in heauen haue receiued from him all the good things which be in them, they be but his seruants, and the fellow seruants of his saints. The fellow seruants vnder one Lord must not worship each other, and therefore the angel sayth, Worship God. There be degrees of excellencie, of giftes, and of dignitie in men and angels, but yet they be all vnder one Lord whome they are to worship alone: which is here ratified thus: I am thy fellow seruant, see thou do it not, worship God. The testimonie of Iesus, saith he, is the spirit of prophecie. The angel comming with this testimonie of Iesus, as the holy Apostles and Prophets did, saith he is their fellow seruant, he commenderth to extol and to magnifie the same Lord Iesus. What exclamation the papists make against vs that we wil not worship angels and saints, that we will not bowe nor kneele to their images, nor make our prayers vnto any but to God, al men do know. O these heretikes, say they, these heretikes are not friends to the saints and angels, but doe hold from them their right and do dishonour them. And these popish idolaters suppose that they do highly delight and please the holy angels and blessed saints when with sacriledge they ascribe vnto them the honour, the glory and worship which is due to God alone. Whereas it is most certaine, that as it is the whole delight and ioy of the blessed companies in heauen to haue the glory of the Lord magnified: so nothing doth more displease them, then when his worship and honour is giuen away from him, either to themselues or to any other creature. And all of them wil say as this Angel sayeth here, see ye doe it not, we are your fellow seruants, worship God.

This place being so cleere, and so strong against all idolaters, that with diuine worship doe adore Angels and Saintes, and images of dead creatures, the Iesuites haue bent all the power of their wittes to weaken and to darken it by cauills, that so they may hold sillie ignorant Papists still in their poperie. First, they make this distinction, that there is a diuine adoration called *Latria*, & that say they, is peculiar to God, and whosoeuer giueth it to any creature, committeth idolatrie. Then they say there is a religious worship inferiour vnto that, which is called *Dulia*, which they say is lawfully giuen vnto Angels and Saintes, & to their images. This is a friuolous cauill: for in the Hebrew tongue, both in the second commandement, and in many other places of the olde Testament, this *Dulia*, which in the Greeke tongue signifieth seruice, is chalenged peculiarly to God. And it is to be proued, that in the auncient vse of the Greeke tongue *Latria*, and *Dulia* did signifie one thing, sauing that *Dulia* was vsed for the deeper subiection in seruice. Now say the Iesuites, S. Iohn mistooke the Angel, for he tooke him to be Christ, because he appeared vnto him in that sort, which we read in the first chapter, and so offereth vnto him the highest worship called *Latria*, which the Angell forbiddeth, shewing that he is not Christ. I answer, that to their former vaine distinction, here they adde

an vntruth: for that was Christ in the first chapter, and ye may see how Saint Iohn saith in the beginning of chapt. 17. that this Angell which sheweth him the damnation of the great whore, and before whom he falleth downe, was one of the seuen Angels which had the seuen vials.

This cauill being answered, let vs come to another. They make an equality betweene Saint Iohn and the Angell in honour with God: so that the Angell knowing his great graces and merites before God, would not accept of any worship or submission at his hands: though he in humilitie did offer it, as againe in chapt. 22. which he would not haue done, if he had been precisely aduised by the Angell but a moment before, of error and vndutifulnes in his fact. If this bee so, why would not the Angell haue tolde it that the Church might know how farre her children might proceede in worshipping of Angels? Nay, why doth he speake so, as that he refuseth it at the hands not of Iohn alone, but of all that haue the testimonie of Iesus, yea of all the seruants of God: for he saith, chapter 22. that hee is the fellow seruant of all that keepe the wordes of this booke. Then no Christian is to worship this Angell, but as he willeth euery one, worship God. Doth the Angell say, thou shalt not doe it, thou art as good as I? If hee doe, because hee saith, I am thy fellow seruant, then he maketh all the faithfull his equals, and so will be worshipped of none. But say they: Abraham adored the Angels that appeared vnto him, Gen. 18. Iosua fell downe flat, and adored the Angell that appeared vnto him. I answer, Abraham did take them to be men, and bowed to giue them ciuill worship, which was vsuall and lawfull to bee done to men. It was the Lorde himselfe which appeared to Iosua, as also to Moses in the bush. Men haue bowed downe before Kings and Prophets, to giue them ciuill honour and reuerence, but otherwise not lawfully. But they demaunde whether we ought not to carrie a religious reuerence vnto the holy Angels, vnto godly men, and vnto things sanctified? What a fond cauill is this, that because we are to loue and to reuerence the Angels, and so the Saints, that therefore we ought to kneele to them, to worship them with religious worship, and to make prayers vnto them. Are we not to reuerence the holy Sacrament of Baptisme, and yet will ye say that we must therefore kneele down to it and worship it? Let vs renounce that abominable idolatry of poperie, let vs loue and reuerence both holy men and blessed

Angels, but as the Angell willeth, let vs worship God.



The 42. Sermon.

CHAP. 19.

- 11 And I saw heauen open, and beholde a white horse, and he that sate upon him, was called faithfull and true, and he iudgeth and fighteth righteously.
- 12 And his eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crownes, and he had a name written, which no man knoweth but himselfe.
- 13 And he was cloathed with a garment dipped in blood: and his name is called the word of God.
- 14 And the warriors which are in heauen, followed him upon white horses, cloathed with fine linnen and pure.
- 15 And out of his mouth went a sharpe sworde, that with it he should smite the heathen: for he shall rule them with a rodde of iron: for he it is, that treadeth the wine presse of the fiercenes and wrath of God almightie.
- 16 And he had upon his garment, and upon his thigh a name written, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.
- 17 And I saw an Angel stand in the sunne, who cried with a loude voyce, saying to all the fowles that did flie by the middest of heauen, come and gather your selues together, to the supper of the great God,
- 18 That ye may eate the flesh of Kings, and the flesh of the high captaines, and the flesh of the mightie men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit upon them, and the flesh of all freemen, and of bondmen, of small and great.
- 19 Then I saw the beast, and the Kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to make warre against him that sate on the horse, and with his armie.
- 20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophets which wrought miracles before him, with which he had seduced them: and they receiued the beasts marke, and them that worshipped his image, both these were cast a live into a lake that burneth with brimstone.
- 21 And the rest were slaine with the sworde of him that sitteth upon the horse, which commeth out of his mouth: and all the birdes were filled with their flesh.

IT was tolde vs in the eleuenth chapter of this booke, that the beast ascending out of the bottomles pit, should make war against the Ministers of Christ, & overcome them. And againe it is sayd in chap. 13. that it was giuen to him, to war with the saints, & to overcome them. This hath been fulfilled & is past, & gone; Antichrist

ichrist hath a long time murthered the true worshippers of God, & that way prevailed against them & overcome them: & now the case doth alter: for here commeth the time, that he & all his shall be overcome & destroyed for euer in eternall destruction. The destroyer shall be destroyed, his turne now commeth. Here is therefore a right glorious, and comfortable description of our graunde captaine Iesus Christ, with his armie comming forth to battaile against them, & overcoming them. The conquerors shall now be conquered, the destroyers shall be (as I said) all destroyed. First, Saint Iohn saith, that he saw heauen open, and from thence commeth forth this mightie captaine and his armie. We haue seene before in this booke, that the beast ariseth out of the bottomles pit, all his power is from hell, euen of the diuell: and now the power that shall cast him downe, and destroy him is of God from heauen: and therefore Iohn seeth heauen open, and this army comming forth to the battaile. As the bottomles pit before was opened chapter 9. So here heauen is opened. And as the great captaines, and mightie warriors, ride vnto battaile vpon strong horses, so here our great Lord Iesus comming forth to warre against Antichrist, appeareth in vision vpon a white horse, and all the warriors on his side, are also vpon white horses: which is to shew, that he commeth with his armies, very swiftly and strongly to the battaile. By the white horse vpon which Christ rideth, is figured the ministrie of the Gospel: for by that the light of the truth of Christ, and the power of his grace are caried and spread swiftly over the large dominions of Antichrist, and doe disclose all his errors and filthie abominations, and so overcome and destroyeth the beast. This battaile is begun already somewhat before our time, and is now in fighting, & shall continue and proceede, casting those enemies downe more and more, euen to the day of iudgement. We haue seene before how their citie Babel shal fall, euen so their popery shal downe & their power, yea & the papists in al countries shalbe so weakened, that they shal fall and be slaine by this sword; great multitudes of them. The Lord Iesus, I say, is come forth already vnto this battaile vpon his white horse. The blessed Lord put his spurre to this horse, that he may yet runne more swiftly, to the casting down of the Romish tyrants: it shall be the comfort of his Church.

Then next he setteth forth, that he that sitteth vpon this horse is called faithfull and iust. Verely he is most faithfull to performe al his promises, & nothing he doth but with perfect equitie and iustice. Concerning the former of these, he hath promised to his Church, that hee will roote out and vtterly destroy all her cruell enemies: and albeit he seemeth to forget his promise, because he hath let them range at pleasure so long: yet now at the last hee maketh it euident and manifest vnto all how true he is of his promise, so that they publish his fame and praise herein: for, as Saint Iohn saith, he is called faithfull. All that haue eyes, doe proclaime this his fame. Like wise the vengeance which he executeth vpon these wicked aduersaries, which is the other point, although it may seeme vnto some, to be with extreame rigour and quickie, yet indeede it is with iustice, it is no more then they haue deserved: and therefore in the next words it is added, that hee iudgeth and fighteth righteously. The kings vpon earth oftentimes doe seeke to make warre each vpon other.

other to doe wrong, to winne vnlawfully and to possesse kingdomes which are not their owne: but this king dealeth not in his warres any way iniustly. There is iust cause why hee should come foorth vnto the battaile against the beast, and the false prophet, and against the kings of the earth which take their part. They bee most wicked enemies, euen set against his glorie, his trueth, and his Church: and haue done all the harme and mischiefe which they could any way bring to passe. And they are not satisfied with all the euils and abominations which they haue committed, but they studie and bend their whole minde, by all euill practises to worke greater harme. Well, they shall not haue their will, this captaine commeth foorth against them, to execute true iudgement, and to fight righteously. In the next place he sayth, that his eyes are as a flame of fire: which teacheth that he doth see into all corners of that darke confused kingdome of poperie, he seeth through all those pretenses and shewes which those Romish seducers set vpon matters pretending the zeale of his name and glorie, to seduce the ignorant. And moreover, whereas that Antichristian generation is exceeding subtil, and in deepe secret conspire mischiefe continually against the true Church, the piercing sight of this our great captaine doth behold the same most cleerely (for nothing can bee hid from his eyes) and doth disappoynt them. How craftily the Iesuites haue practised treasons in this land, who is it that hath not heard? And how our Lord Iesus fighting against them, in defence and preservation of his Church, hath with these his eyes like a flame of fire, espied out their secrets and brought them to light, wee haue all scene to our comfort. So that we may fully ground our selues vpon this, to our singular consolation, that although the Romish sort be wonderfull subtil, and full of as many deepe sleights as the craftines of the old serpent can affoord, in this battaile which they make against the Church, yet wee neede not feare, seeing our great leader hath such eyes as do pierce into their deepest secrets. Valiant men of warre are sometimes ouer reached by the craft of their enemies: but none can ouer reach this captaine, his sight is so cleere.

It is then further added, that he hath vpon his head many crownes. Ye knowe that kings and conquerors are crowned. Here then is the great king of all kings, and the conqueror of conquerors, which is figured here by that hee hath vpon his head many crownes. He hath vanquished the diuell, and death and hell: hee hath made the proudest in the world among men for to stoope, and downe shall the beast and his companie goe, as not able any way to stand in his hands. The Popes haue vsurped great power, yea euen the power which is peculiar to the Lord Iesus: and therefore they haue worne triple crownes, as hauing kingly power in heauen, in earth, and in purgatorie. For this their wicked and blasphemous sacrilege, the Lord Iesus commeth foorth in battaile against them to execute iust vengeance. Here commeth that Lord which hath the power indeed, euen he that conquereth all his enemies, then downe goeth the beast with all his force, euen of necessitie. Let vs be wise then and ioyne with this Lord: for men would gladly be of that side which shall ouercome: and this side shall surely ouercome.

Then it is added, that he had a name written, which no man knew but himselfe.

What

What is this name, but his infinit and incomprehensible glorie, and maiestie, and power, being eternall God ouer al equall with the father? There be none among men, nor yet among the holy Angels, that can knowe this name. Yet as ye see, S. Iohn sayth that the name is written. All doe read and know that he hath such a name: but know it or comprehend it, they cannot. He knoweth it, being the eternall wisdom of the father. For this ye must hold as an vndoubted principle, that the blessed Angels in heauen, which are sayd to behold the face of God, cannot behold him in his perfection: for he is infinit, and how can any creature comprehend that which is infinit? In the next part of the description, he sheweth how he is arrayed, or in what manner of clothing he commeth: for he sayth, he was clothed in a garment dipped in blood. This is the attyre of him that hath made slaughter of his enemies: for a mightie man which in battaile slaith with the sword, hath his garments sprinkled and stained with blood: and such as trode the wine-presse, the red iuyce of the grapes did staine their clothes. This great Lord of ours hath made slaughter of his enemies in all ages, and hath troden them like grapes in the wine-presse of Gods wrath; and therefore comming foorth now to battaile against the beast, and the kings of the earth which take his part, he is shewed in vision clothed with his warlike garment, all stained with blood, to represent what shall befall these enemies. This declareth that hee will now execute vengeance vpon them and destroy them. Then ye may see what his garment dipped in blood, doth pretend. And wee must note, that all this is according to the ancient figure: for the Prophet Esay, chap. 63. bringeth in Christ, hauing made slaughter of the enemies of his Church, with his garments all stained with their blood. The wicked papists now at pleasure doe blaspheme his trueth, and persecute those which doe professe it: they make small account of any threatening which he hath vttered: but they shall finde him a most terrible God of vengeance. His vengeance is here foreshe-wed in his garment. Woe be to all his enemies, when this garment is once put on: for how shall they escape? Let vs take heede that we bee not found in the campe of his enemies: as all those bee which impugne and hinder the course of his Gospel. Yea to bee sure, that we shall not bee found among the enemies, let vs fight valiantly on his side in maintenance of the holy faith, against all the wicked corrupters of the holy and pure religion, otherwise we doe not our dutie.

Then he addeth, that his name is called, the word of God. He had before, as we haue scene, a name that none did know but himselfe, which is his incomprehensible maiestie: and here hee is set foorth by a name that we may vnderstand and know, and that is, he is called the word of God. This is not to bee taken for that word of God which is written in the Bible, or which is pronounced: but as Saint Iohn speaketh in the first chapter of his Gospel, In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. This word of God is very God himselfe, euen the eternall wisdom of the Father, the second person in the most glorious trinitie. He openeth and manifesteth all the counsels of God: he is the publisher of his wil, in him, and by him the Father hath manifested himself to the world: whereby we may perceiue why he is called the word of God. For as in

man,

man, the counsels and intents, and purposes lye secret and vnknowne, vntill by word he vtter them, and it is his word that manifesteth the same: so the Lord Iesus as the essentiall worde (which no similitude can expresse fully) openeth the counsels of the father. Antichrist, against whom he commeth forth to battaile, challenged to himselfe this glorie, that what he vttered and decreed, it must be taken as the vndoubted truth of God, and so robbed this great Lord of his honour: for which he will now be reuenged vpon him.

In the next place is shewed, how the warriors in heauen doe follow him, which he on his part. For although he bee of that power, that hee can alone without the helpe of any, destroy at once all his enemies, yea euen with the breath of his mouth: yet notwithstanding, he vseth the ministrie both of men and Angels, & hath great armies of noble warriors to fight against the beast. They are sayd to bee warriors in heauen, not that they bee onely the Angels: but because the ministers of the Gospell vpon earth, and all the right valiant men of warre which fight with the materiall sword against Antichrist, doe not fight for any earthly cause, nor with earthly power, but for the kingdome of heauen, and with heauenly armour: for those respects they are likewise sayd for to be warriors in heauen. All these follow the great captaine Iesus Christ, they fight vnder his banner, armed with his might, for his cause, and by his direction. These ride all vpon horses, they be swift, strong, and well appoynted also to the battaile. Their horses be white, which signifieth innocencie and puritie: for these fight not as men here in the world commonly doe, led thereunto with furie and wrath, and with bloudie and cruell affections, or for vaine glorie: but with the loue & pure zeale of Gods glorie. Then may we note, that as they haue a good cause, so they do handle it well: they followe their captaine, and stand in the defence of the truth, and of Gods holy worship against the Romish beast, with all integritie and simplicitie. O what a blessed thing it is, beloued, to be of this company, to fight vnder this captaine, with so holy and pure affection. Take courage and stand for the glorious Gospell, that wee may bee of this armie that follow Christ vpon white horses.

It is sayd further, that out of his mouth went a sharpe sword, that with it hee should finite the heathen. This is the weapon which he dooth fight withall, with which he shall strike the heathen, euen all his prophane enemies. They bee Christians in name which worship the beast, but yet heathen, indeede. This sworde commeth not out of any mouth but his, it is his owne mightie word. It is very sharpe, yea as it is sayd in the epistle to the Hebrewes, chapt. 4. sharper then any two edged sword. With this he striketh and slayeth not onely wicked men, but euen the diuels. This pure word doth not only slay Antichrist with spirituall death, but also manifesteth and discloseth their abominations, and so weakeneth their multitude, and layeth them open to the materiall sword of princes. For in this last battaile of Christ against the beast, there shall be not onely a spirituall slaughter, but also a killing of their bodies here vpon earth with the sword in warres. In the next place here is a saying out of the second Psalm, that he shall rule them with a rod of iron. The Prophet Dauid in that Psalm describing the kingdom of Christ,

vseth

vseth this speech, that he shall breake them with a scepter of iron, and dash them in peeces like a potters vessell. An iron mace doth easily beate an earthen pitcher all to sheards, and with such power shall Christ beate downe all the wicked, they shall be but euen like pot sheards. The enemies are very many, and they be mighty: for Satan mustereth great armies, but Christ Iesus alone is too strong for them all. They bee arrogant and proude, and lift vp themselves in their multitude and strength, as if they could doe at pleasure what they list: and yet in very deepe are but as earthen pitchers before him, when hee shall strike them with his iron rod.

Here is also by another similitude expressed, how he shall destroy all the wicked. The clusters of grapes are cut downe and cast together into the wine-presse, and then they do tread the presse to crush out the iuyce of them. Hell is the great wine-presse of the wrath of God, all the vngodly shall bee cast into it on heapes euen as clusters of grapes, and the Lorde Iesus shall (as hee sayth here) tread this wine-presse of the fiercenes of the wrath of God almightie. There is yet one braunch of the description of this captaine remaining, which is, that he had vpon his garment, and vpon his thigh a name written, the King of kings, and Lorde of lords. This is a name of great dignitie and glorie, that he is King of kings, and the ruler ouer all rulers. The kings of the earth and the great men haue many vnder them which be their subiects: but these kings themselves bee subiect vnto Christ, and he doth raigne ouer them. We see then what manner of one he is which here commeth forth vnto battaile, doubt not of the victorie: for who is it that shall withstande him? The beast and the false prophet are strong indeede, they haue kings on their side, they haue great armies and powers, they bee fierce and cruell: but yet they shall all downe, here is one that is too hard for them all, if they were tenne thousand times as strong as they be. And that followeth now in the text: for as S. Iohn hath set forth the glorious description of this most mighty captaine, so now he commeth to shew the victorie which he obtaineth. And that we might the better consider of it, as of no small conquest, it is here proclaimed, described, and set forth in a right excellent, and goodly manner.

I saw (sayth S. Iohn) an Angell stand in the Sunne. Here is the proclaimer of the victorie, and the place in which he stood for to proclaime it. It is an Angell, euen one of the heauenly ministers, which God hath appoynted to this work. And as they that proclaime any matter, seeke some place to stand in where they may bee best heard: so this Angell standeth in the Sunne. The Sunne giueth light to the whole world, it compasseth about, and the eyes of all are turned towards it, and therefore the fittest place to bee chosen for this purpose. But here it may bee sayd, the battaile is not yet fought, here is then proclamation of victorie, before the battaile. Is that a right order? I answer, that in mens matters it is a preposterous order: but not in Gods matters. It hath fallen out oftentimes in the warres, when as princes haue gone to battaile with their armies each against other, that the smaller armie and farre the weaker hath gotten the victorie. It is as it pleaseth the Lord God of hostes to dispose. Wherefore in those battailes to triumph before

fore the victorie, is no wisdom, because the event of the warre is vncertaine. Benhadad king of Aram, boasted against the king of Israell comming vnto battell. But the king of Israel sent him this word, Let not him that girdeth on his harneis boast, as hee that putteth it off, 1. King. 20. 11. And indeed Benhadad had sustained two great ouerthrowes, and yet there was such oddes in the armies, that it is said, The Aramites filled the countrey, but the children of Israell pitched before them like two little flockes of kiddes. The Lord God of hosts, as I said, did often overthrow the stronger by the weaker. But now we must note that the matter resteth not in any doubt at all in the battell of Christ against his enemies. Hee is most sure to overcome them: and therefore no preposterous order here to proclaime the victorie before the battell.

Then next let vs see after what manner this victorie is set foorth. It is vnder this figure of calling a great number of guests to a feast. When men are slaine in great number in the warres, their bodies lye as meate to the fowles of the aire. Now here all the fowles are called, and promised a great supper made them by the great God. Their dainties are reckoned vp, euen the flesh of kings, of high captaines, of mighty men, of horses, and of their riders, of free men, of bond men, of small and great. Here is their cheere. It may be demaunded, shall Christ overthrow them with a bodily slaughter? Is it not a spirituall sword with which he shall strike them? How then is here mention made that the fowles shall be filled with their flesh? I answer vnto this, that it is chiefly a spiritual slaughter that our Sauour Christ will slay them withall, which is here figured out (according to the manner of this booke) by the bodily slaughters of great armies, where the dead bodies doe lye and are meate to the fowles of the ayre: but yet the other slaughter is not excluded: for the word of God doth disclose them, and make them appeare so abominable, that the Christian princes shall in the defence of the Gospell make warre vpon, and slay thousands of thousands of them, and let them lye as meate for the fowles of the aire. The Lord will overthrow them euery way: for many of them shal haue their blood shed vpon the earth, and they shall all be slaine eternally. Now after the description of our captaine, and of the victorie which he shall obtaine, here followeth a briefe mention of the captaines and armies of the aduersaries, which are shewed vnto Iohn in vision also. For as it is with the kings of the earth when they go forth vnto the wars, that they bring their armies where they meete together and try it out, so here these armies doe meete. There is mustering, there is leuying of power, and there is meeting, and assembling, and preparing as fast as may bee on the enemies part. I saw (saith Iohn) the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together, to make warre against him that sat on the horse, and with his armie. Here ye see that which I noted in generall, that here is great preparation, and the meeting of the armies: and now we may obserue sundrie particulars. As first, the captaine of this armie appeareth, for hee sayth, I saw the beast. Christ commeth formost as the leader in the other armie, and here in this armie the beast: For the beast is their generall. Some may demande, Is not the deuill the graunde captaine ouer all the armies of the wicked enemies of God? Do they not all fight vnder his banner; and

and in the defence of his kingdome? How is it then that the beast is scene as the chiefe on this part? for answer vnto this, ye must consider these three things, first that the deuill as it is in chap. 13. hath giuen to the beast, his power and throne, and great authoritie. Whereby we are giuen to vnderstand, that Satan worketh by the beast, the beast is but his instrument which he vseth, and therefore Satan is not here excluded, although he appeare not in vision.

Then for the second, we may note, that in this vision here are shewed vnto Iohn, onely those which in open apparance make warre against the Gospell and against those which professe it. Satan doth indeed worke al this war which is made against our Lord: but he doeth it closely. He stirreth vp the beast and the kings of the earth which take part with the beast, and all their armies, but yet so as he seduceth them: for he doeth not tell them plainly that they shall fight for him, to maintaine his kingdome, or to be his seruants, for that woulde take away their courage: Neither doth he let them vnderstand, that he leadeth them against the Lord Iesus, against the most glorious gospell of God, and against his saints: for that were horrible, but he beareth them in hand that they shal fight for the Catholike faith, & for the Catholike Church, against heresies, and heretikes, and against new learning. Thus I say, he seduceth them, and leadeth them vnto the battaile against Christ. Then may ye note, that although he doe not appeare in the vision at this battaile, because he worketh closely, yet he is their graund captaine vnder whose banner they doe all of them fight.

The third thing then, why he is not here set forth in this vision comming to this battaile, is that he hath bene so generall a doer in all ages, that here followeth a special vision for him in the next chapter. For as the beast and all his power is here overthrowen, so in the next chapter we shall see how this great captaine ouer them all, euen the dragon, is taken, which set them al on worke. Thus may ye see some reasons, why he doth not in this vision appeare.

Now touching the beast here spoken of, which is the captaine in this armie, with whom some kings do ioyne, it is he which is set forth and described chap. 13. it is the Romane Empire, both the former and the latter, that is both of the Emperors which were heathen, and of the popes, as it is most euident in that 13. chapter. This beast hath bene the murderer of the saintes, euer since the time of our sauour Christ. And although the power of this beast, through the preaching of Gods holy word, is greatly deminished, yet he ceaseth not to warre still against Christ, and shall doe euen vntill he bee vtterly overthrowen: yea and moreouer wee see it euident, that some kings and great potentates shall still take his part, euen to the end. Also marke howe it is shewed S. Iohn, that the kings and their armies are assembled with the beast, to fight against Christ. They ioyne close and fast together, they haue entered into a league, which they call the holy league, and bound themselues by othe and vowe, to roote out all those that professe the holy gospell, which they call heresie. It is greatly to be wished that all kings and princes and churches which haue renounced that idolatrous tyrannie of Antichrist, and embraced the holy gospell, would ioyne as firmly against them. They doe not onely at this day ioyne so together, but also

also are so industrious and so full of their craftie sleights, and subtrill deuises, and colourable shewes as it is wonderfull to consider. And shall they be so diligent, and so forward in so bad a cause, euen to fight against Christ, & that to serue the deuill to their eternal destruction? And shal not we be as readie and forward to stand in the defence of the holy worship and glorie of the Lord our God, seeing it shall be vnto our euerlasting saluation? Shall they doe more for their reward with the deuill in hell, whose seruants they be, and whome they doe obey: then we for the reward with Christ in heauen, whome as our most gracious Lord, we ought most willing to serue? Let vs be euen ashamed to come behind these wicked souldiers of Antichrist, which here are gathered to the battaile. Shal they be more faithfull to their wicked lord, then we to our good Lord? They assemble to the battaile, and it followeth presently, the beast was taken, and the false prophet with him. It is done without any difficultie to Christ, though their power be great: for he is of infinite power. We may note that here is a warre-like phtase vsed when he saith the beast is taken, and with him the false prophet: For in the warres they vse to take the great captaines aliue if they can: So bee they here taken aliue, not for to spare them, being so monstrous rebels against God, but for their greater torment, as we shall see it here also expressed.

But what shall we say to this, that here is mention of the beast, and of the false prophet also? If the beast comprehend all the Romane Empire, both the former which was of the heathen Emperours, and the latter which was of the Popes, who is this false prophet, that wrought miracles, that seduced them that worshipped the beastes image, and receiued his marke? Is not this false prophet the Pope and his Clergie, which seduced the world with lying wonders? Wee haue answered this before in the visions which haue been shewed to Saint Iohn, as in chapter 13. there were two beasts, the one with seuen heads, the other with two hornes like a lamb. That beast with two hornes is the papacie. Hee is a seuerall beast by himselfe, in that he exerciseth an other power, besides the power of the heathen Emperours of Rome, and he is one head of the same beast, in that he set vp the image of that former beast, and exercised that power also which that former beast had done. And so the Angel chap. the 17. saith, that the seuenth head of the beast, is also the eight. In that hee is one of the seuen heads of that former beast, hee is included in that beast: and in that hee is the eight, that is, an head by himselfe, besides that other beast, therein he is the false prophet. And therefore as in chap. 13. there appeare two beasts which oppresse the Church: so here againe they be set forth by two, that is, the beast and the false prophet, that we might know that al the tyrannie of the empire of Rome goeth downe, both in their ciuill, and in their ecclesiasticall power. Their dominion goeth downe, and downe goeth their worship and religion also. These Romanes with all their power and fallshood in religion, are cast aliue into a lake of fire and brimstone. Here is a short description of those torments of hell, and of that most horrible vengeance into which those wicked ones shall bee cast, and euen in most fearfull maner, which is expressed by this, that they are cast in aliue. For there are degrees of torments, and those great masters of mischief shall

shall haue the greatest torment, next vnto the deuils. All that take part with them are damned, for hee saith, they are slaine with the sworde which commeth out of Christs mouth, that is, with the word of God. And that is a spirituall death and euerlasting. Thus ye see the end of all Gods enemies, euen of all that oppose themselves against his trueth, and against his Church. And to expresse the greatnes of the slaughter, it is said, and all the birdes were filled with their flesh. Thus much touching this vision.



The 43. Sermon. CHAP. 20.

- 1 And I saw an Angell comming downe from heauen, which had the key of the bottomlesse pit, and a great chaine in his hand.
- 2 And he tooke the dragon that olde serpent, which is the deuill and Satan, and bound him a thousand yeares.
- 3 And hee cast him into the bottomlesse pit, and shut him up, and sealed ouer him, that he shuld not seduce the nations any more untill the thousand yeres were expired: for after ward he must be loosed for a little time.
- 4 And I saw seates, and there were that sate vpon them, and iudgement was given vnto them. And the soules of them that were beheaded for the testimonie of Iesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his Image, neither receiued his marke in their foreheads, or in their hands, and they liued and raigned with Christ a thousand yeares.
- 5 The rest of the dead liued not, until the thousand yeares were finished, this is the first resurrection.
- 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection, for on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be the priests of God and of Christ, and shall raigne with him a thousand yeares.



He fall of great Babel, and her finall destruction, is set forth before in the 18. chapter. That great Babel is the citie of Antichrist, described in the 17. chapter vnder the figure of a woman drunken with the bloud of the Saints. Where it is manifest by the wordes of the Angell, that Rome is that woman, which hath drunk so much bloud. Then further wee haue had in the nineteenth chapter the vtter ouerthrowe and condemnation of the beast, and of the false prophet, and of all that take their part, for the Lord Iesus commeth forth vnto battell against them. The

beast is set forth chapter 13. with seuen heads, which are seuen hilles vpon which Rome was built, and seuen kinges, that is, seuen kindes of kingly power by which that citie hath bene supported. The dominion of popes is the seuenth head of that beast, and the Angell calleth it also the eight, because it chalenged a double power. And for that cause that monarchie of the popes is set forth not only as one head of the beast, but also as a seuerall beast by it selfe, which here is called the false prophet. Then we see, that the Empire goeth downe, the papacie goeth downe, the whole kingdome of Antichrist goeth downe with their whole religion and worship, yea with all that take their part, when Christ commeth forth vnto battaile against them. And now after we haue bene told how these shall be destroyed, hee commeth to set forth the condemnation of the greatest and chiefest of them all, euen of their grand captain which set them al on work, & that is the dragon which is described before chap. 12. He is the beginner, he is the raiser vp of the rest, hee is the great worker of al mischief & now commeth his iudgement & condēnation.

It may be demanded, shall not Satan bee ouerthrowen, and damned together with his instruments? Yes no doubt. Why then is hee not overcome in that battel with the beast & the false prophet? I answer, that he is ouerthrowen & takē in that battel, but not there set forth, but in a visiō by it selfe. His armies are brought in with him, with whom he is ouerthrowen, but vnder other titles. Now ye may note that there is an euident cause, why the historie of his condemnation is brought in by it selfe after all the other, and that is, that his mischief hath extended it selfe further then by the Romane power, and hee hath other armies besides the beast and the false prophet, which all in generall are here brought in with him. To come then neerer to the historie, ye haue in all the destructions of Christs enemies, the causes repeated for which they bee destroyed, to the ende that it may well appeare, that they haue but their desert. So shall ye find it here, that is, before Satans condemnation is described, here is set forth how well he hath deserued such torments. His mischieses that he hath wrought are briefly rehearsed. But now I will come to the words of the text.

Saint Iohn sayth, And I sawe an Angell descending from heauen, hauing the key of the bottomlesse pit and a great chaine in his hand. This doth not set forth Satans finall destruction, but an auncient matter, that is, how hee was bound and chained vp in old time. And therefore there is in this vision preparation shewed for that matter, for here commeth an Angell from heauen with the key of the bottomlesse pit, and a great chaine. Here is the key of the prison into which hee must be locked vp, and the chaine with which he must there lye bound. Then who is this Angell, and when came he downe thus for to bind him, and to locke him vp in the bottomlesse pit? This Angel is our Lord Iesus, the great chaine wherewith he doth bind him, is the holy and pure doctrine of the gospel, the time that he was thus taken and bound with it, was when first Christ preached it, and then his Apostles vnto all nations. And now marke how he is bound. This dragon, as we see is set forth chap. 12. hauing seuen heads and ten hornes, and vpon his heads seuen crownes. He had with his might and with his subtilties seduced and overcome the nations

of

of the earth and raigned as Lord and king, yea they worshipped him as God. For all the worship of the heathen nations was the worship of deuils, as Saint Paul teacheth, 1. Cor. 10. He did not onely beare sway in all the great and large kingdoms of the world which were heathen, but also wheras the Lord had separated one little corner, euen one nation of the Iewes, and had giuen them his holy ordinances and lawes, whereby they might haue light and not bee seduced, euen among them also, he had set in his foote, and seduced euen the most of them. He brought in sundrie sects among them which corrupted and depraued the doctrine of Moses and the prophets. What a prince was Satan now? how did he range ouer the worlde? But now commeth a chaine for him. Christ doth preach, & sendeth forth his disciples with power, & faith, I saw Satan fall down from heauē likelighting, Luk. 10. 18. Hee now beginneth to fall downe from his dignitie and great magnificence. Afterward when the Lord was ascended, and had sent downe the holy Ghost vpon his Apostles, and they preached not onely in Iudea, but also among the heathen nations, & great multitudes had their eies opened, & turned from idolatrie to worship the true and liuing God, then was there a great chaine put vpon him, and hee was bound. The light did now shine so cleere, that he could not seduce as he had done. For that is the binding of Satan, when hee is so restrained by the light of the gospel, that he can not seduce men vnto false worship. And marke, that although he be the great mightie dragon, euen that old craftie serpent, yet he can not winde out neither by might, nor yet by any sleight, but that this angel doth catch him and chaine him vp. They vse to chaine vp such fell things as will doe harme when they runne loose. And because Satan of all other is the most mischieuous, hee must be chained vp. And besides all this, he must be shut vp in prison, which is in the bottomlesse pit, and the doore locked and sealed vp, euen to shew that hee must be strongly restrained or else he will abroad, hee is so set vpon all mischief: Also the sealing doth teach, that God hath decreed with an vchangeable purpose, that hee shall not be let loose vntill the time be expired. And the time is set that he should be chained for a thousand yeares. It is not certaine from what yeare these thousand are to be begunne, whether from the time that Christ began to preach and began to bind Satan, or from the time that the Apostles had spread the holy doctrine among the nations, neither is it greatly materiall. For this is the purpose of the holy Ghost to set downe this long time of a thousand yeares, in which Satan should lie bound, not to tie vs precisely to that number of a iust thousand, as to say, neither one yere or two more or lesse, but though it were some few more, yet the full number is set downe onelie: Satan should for a long time be tyed vp. Now if we count the yeares, this is most certaine, that somewhat more then a thousand yeares after our Lords passion, there were most horrible wicked popes, and especially Hildebrand, called Gregorie the seuenth, who was a coniurer and dealt by the deuill. Their owne histories doe plainly shew, that about that time diuers popes came in by the deuill, and Satan was then said to raigne in the popedome. Hee had before this obtained, that the Bishop of Rome should be esteemed as head of all Bishops, and now looke what he would vtter to the world, he vttereth it vnder his name, e-

uen as vnder the name of Christes vicar, and as of one that sitteth in Peters chaire. The world, as we shall see when we come to the loosing of Satan, was now againe seduced. But now ariseth a question, was Satan shut vp in hell for the space of a thousand yeeres? was he not in the world? who then seduced the reprobate in all that time? for howsoeuer great multitudes imbraced the truth, yet farre greater did impugne and blaspheme it. And who stirred vp those cruell persecutions, as he said before in this booke vnto one of the Churches, behold Satan shall cast some of you into prison? Or who sent those horrible routs of heretikes of whom we read, which immediatly after the Apostles times entred? I answer, that we must not take it that Satan is shut vp in hell for this time in such sort as that he should do nothing in the world: but he is said to bee chained vp in the bottomlesse pit, to signify that hee could not now generally seduce as he had done. He wrought now in the wicked mightily, and with so great rage and wrath, that it is sayd Chap. 12. Woe be to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea: for behold, the deuill is come downe vnto you, full of wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time. Then make this account that Satan, in these thousand yeares, was bound one way, but another way he was loose. He was bound for seducing (as S. Iohn expresth it) but he was not bound from other mischieses which he wrought in great plentie. After the thousand yeares expired, S. Iohn saith, he must be let loose againe, for a little season. This little time, in which the deuill was let loose, is the time in which the great Antichrist did beare swaye. For the comming of Antichrist (as S. Paul teacheth) should be, with al efficacie of Satan. There be fifteen hundreth years past since the Apostles were taken out of this world, & for these threescore yeares & more, the gospel hath been preached, so that the very fulnes, and strength of the poperie lasted but foure or fife hundred yeares. In that time, Satan deluded the world, & led them into all abominable superstition, Idolatrie, and wicked errors, & with such strong delusion, to beleue lies, as it is wonderfull to thinke vpon.

In the next words the state of the Church is set forth, for that thousand years in which the deuill is chained vp. S. Iohn sayth, he saw seates and there were that fate vpon them, and iudgement was giuen vnto them: And the soules of them, that were beheaded for the testimonie of Iesus, & for the word of God, &c. The Church of God is but one, but yet we say, the Church militant, and the Church triumphant: for one part is warring vpon the earth & that is militant, the other part hath gotten the victorie ouer the deuill & sinne, and their soules triumph in heauen, and therefore called the church triumphant. Now the question is here, whether S. Iohn do here set forth the flourishing estate of the Church triūphante onely when he sayth, I saw seates, & there were that fate on them, & iudgement was giue vnto them, &c. Or whether he be to be vnderstood of both, that is the militant and triumphant: because that after he hath said, I saw seates, and there were that fate on them, he addeth that he saw y^e soules of them that were beheaded, for the testimony of Iesus. It is vsually taken of interpreters onely for the church triumphant. That is to say, that S. Iohn in vision saw the soules of the martyrs sitting vpon seates, and exercising iudgement, not as hauing the office of Christ deriued

deriued vnto them, who is properly the onely iudge of both quicke and dead, but as the members ioyned vnto their head: And so they are sayd to liue and to raig with Christ. This doctrine is according to the words of Christ to his Apostles, Ye shal sit vpon twelue seates, iudging the twelue tribes of Israel. And to that which S. Paul saith, Know ye not that we shal iudge the Angels? 1. Cor. 6. 3 So that it may very well be said here, that the soules of the martyrs do sit vpon seates, and iudge, and raig with Christ. But I take it, that S. Iohn doth not here alone set forth the state of the Church triumphant, for that time in which Satan was bound, but also sheweth how in those dayes the Church militant vpon earth, did flourish and exercise her power: for it seemeth very requisite, that somewhat should be sayd of the state of the Church in the worlde, while Satan did lie in his chaine. And the words themselves which S. Iohn hath set downe, do deuide the matter into two parts. I saw (sayth he) seates, and there were that fate vpon them, & iudgement was giuen vnto them: And the soules, that is, and I saw the soules of them that were beheaded for the testimonie of Iesus &c. I take the seates then, & them that sit vpon them, to be vpon the earth in the Church militant: and that to describe, and set forth how the Church exercised her power in the world that thousand yeares that Satan was bound. The Scribes, and Pharisees were sayd to sit in Moses chaire, as we read how Christ our Lord speaketh, Matth. 23. Euen so all the Apostles, and their successours haue chaires, or seates in the which they exercise iudgement, whilest they doe deliuer forth the pure doctrine, that ruleth and iudgeth among the nations, as it is written Esai. 2. These seates were set in many landes, where there were great Churches, which had very famous teachers, that did instruct and guide the flockes, according to the rules of the holy word. Now was iudgement giuen them, now was the power of our Lord Iesus exercised whilest Satan lay bound with his chaine. In this thousand yeares those Churches did liue & raig with Christ. For that latter clause, which is, they did liue & raig, may very well be referred to the former part of the sentence: and not onely to the soules of the martyrs which liue vpon earth should liue and raig with Christ thole thousand yeares, in which the Dragon was tyed vp from seducing: For all the faithfull doe after a sort liue and raig with Christ while they be here vpon the earth: seeing that through faith, they ouercome the world, as it is written: 1. Ioh. 5. They subdue Satan, and sinne. This is to be obserued against the error of the Chiliastes, or Millenaries, They be both one, for *Chilias* in the greeke tongue is a thousand, and *Mille* is so many in the latine. So that *Chiliastes*, or *Millenaris*, are they which from this scripture did gather, that after the ouerthrowe of Antichrist, the Lorde Iesus would come, & with the faithful raig here a thousand yeres vpon the earth. And that in this time, that Christ should so raig as a great and glorious king vpon earth, his subiectes should inioy all manner of earthly pleasures and delights. This fond error is confuted by the words that follow in the text, as we shall see afterward.

But here may arise some doubt, vpon this that S. Iohn saith, he saw the soules of them, which refused to worship the beast, and the image of the beast, and that receiued not his marke, in their forehead, nor in their handes. The doubt is this, how he may be said, to see the soules of those, that would not worship the Image of the beast, in those thousand yeares that Satan was bound: seeing the Image of the beast, was not set vp vntill Satan was loosed. We know this that in, and from the time of the Apostles, the sixth head of the Romane tyrannie was vp, that is the Empire, and that vnder the heathen Emperors many thousands were put to death, for refusing to worship that beast. They would not obey the romish lawes, which commanded to worship idols: and so they were put to death. These were indeed in those thousand yeares. But now the seventh head of that beast, which is the second beast, the beast with two hornes like a lambe, which without all controuersie is granted on all parts to be the great Antichrist, he setteth vp the Image of the beast, and causeth the inhabitants of the earth, to worship it. He causeth them to receiue the marke, of which he here speaketh. This beast, that setteth vp the Image to be worshipped, reigneth not in those thousand yeares in which Satan is bound, but is he by whome Satan when he is loosed, doth seduce the nations. How then saith S. Iohn, that those which were slaine, because they would not worship the image of the beast, nor receiue his marke did liue and raigne with Christ that thousande yeares? They are slaine for not worshipping the image of the beast, after those thousand yeares are expired, euen in the daies that Satan againe being let loose, seduceth the nations. It may be answered, that the second beast, the tyrannie of the popes, which is called the false prophet, rose not vp of a suddaine, or at once, but by degrees, and was growen to a great height before that full loosing of Satan. We read how S. Paul speaketh of it 2. Thes. 2. Howe the mysterie of iniquitie did worke euen in his time. If Satan in those dayes of the Apostle when the greatest power was for to binde him, did secretly lay the foundations of that wicked apostasie, we may wel thinke that the worke was growen to some perfection, before the thousand yeares were expired: Although not to such as at the full loosing and after the loosing of Satan. So then there might be, and was, great tyrannie vsed against the seruants of God before Satans loosing, by the second beast. It may be some will say, that although those holy seruants of God which were put to death, because they would not worship the image of the beast, were after the thousand yeares, yet Saint Iohn seeth them altogether in vision, with those which were slaine by the heathen Emperors in the former part of those thousand yeares. If wee take it so, how could he say, that they did liue and raigne with Christ, that thousand yeares? I take it therefore, that the words are thus to be ioyned, that Iohn saw seats, and there were that sate vpon them, and iudgement was giuen vnto them, & they liued and raigned with Christ a thousand yeeres, taking it of the church in earth: and not to ioyn it to the soules which he saw, as to say, that they liued and raigned with Christ a thousand yeeres. For that thousand yeeres then, in which Satan was bound from seducing the nations so generally as hee had

done,

done, the Gospell preuailed & conuerted very many vnto God, ruling & iudging, though not in so full measure as in the former times. For in the time of the Apostles, the light of the gospell was spread far and neere in the heathen kingdoms, and that with all pure sincerity. After their daies, abuses & corruptions crept in, and superstition increased and that more and more, but yet so that euen to the full thousand yeeres, the principles & grounds of the holy faith were held in great churches. So although after six hundred yeeres the cleer sincerity of the truth was much dimmed, yet there was a generall power still, and they liued and raigned with Christ which were quickned by the Gospell in all lands. The words which follow doe more cleerly carry the sense this way. For first he expoundeth the matter by the contrary, when hee saith, the rest of the dead liued not, vntill the thousand yeeres were finished. Marke well this saying: for it openeth much, together with that exposition which followeth of it. For indeed the words that follow doe declare in expresse and plain manner, what life, and what rising from the dead this is to be vnderstood of, which the rest of the dead do not attaine vnto.

Touching the former, wherein, as I said, he openeth the matter by the contrary: it is in these words, the rest of the dead liued not vntill these thousand yeeres were finished: here is first evidently shewed that all were dead, & that one part are raised from death in these thousand yeeres, and an other part is not raised, whom he calleth the rest of the dead. For vnles some were raised from death to life, in those thousand yeeres, and others not raised, how could it bee sayd, the rest of the dead liued not &c? Or how could he speake of a resurrection? To make this more euident, we must first note the generall estate that all be in by nature, both the elect and the reprobate, and that is, all be dead, for in regard of the elect which are raised vp out of that general estate, the reprobate are called the rest of the dead. What manner of death this is, the holy scriptures doe euidently set forth. Being all corrupted in Adam, we all die in him as the Apostle teacheth, 1. Cor. 15. And that is to be vnderstood, not only of this separation of the soule and body, but also of a spirituall death in the soule, euen while we liue here. For whosoever are separated from God, there is no true life in them. But looke how the diuels may after a sort be said to liue, and yet it is no life indeed, but an euermore death: so the soules of men although they haue naturall powers and faculties in them by which they giue life to the bodies, and in that respect are immortall, because those faculties neuer die, yet so long as they be vnder the dominion of sinne, they be dead touching the spirituall life. And in this state are al, both the elect and the reprobate, the elect herein only differing, that they be raised vp to life in Christ. And you (saith S. Paul) hath he quickned, that were dead in trespasses and sinnes Ephes. 2. ver. 1. Also in the same chapter hee saith, he made vs aliue together with Christ, when we were dead through trespasses. And in the fourth chapter of the same epistle, he saith, they were strangers from the life of God, ver. 18. All then being by nature (as the same Apostle saith) the children of wrath, now let vs see how the difference of the elect

is made from those whom hee calleth here the rest of the dead. It is made by Christ, they are raised vp to a spirituall life by him, euen while they liue here. And our Lord Iesus himselſe setteth forth this thing very plainly, Iohn 5. ver. 25. ſaying, the time ſhall come, and now is, when the dead ſhall heare the voice of the ſonne of God, and they that heare it ſhall liue. Then Chriſt by his voice raiſeth the ſoule to life, they that are choſen, heare the Goſpell and liue by it. But all are not raiſed, for he ſaith the reſt of the dead liued not vntill the thouſand yeares were finiſhed. What is that? This it is, in thoſe thouſand yeares, in which the Goſpell is preached, and the voice of Chriſt which raiſeth the dead, is ſounded forth with great power, there be many which are not raiſed vp vnto life by it, but do continue ſtill in their former eſtate, vnder the power of ſinne euen ſtrangers from the life of God. All are not raiſed from the death of ſin, vnto the life of righteouſnes, at the ſound of the Goſpel. There were many that heard Chriſt himſelſe preach, many that heard the Apoſtles, which were not raiſed to life, but remained ſtill vnder the power of Satan, and were dead in ſinne. Many in thoſe thouſand yeares in which the Goſpel flouriſhed, and Satan lay bound, were raiſed from death, & did liue & raigne with Chriſt, but many more, whom he calleth the reſt of the dead, deſpiſed the Goſpell, and ſo were not raiſed to life by it, whom he calleth the reſt of the dead. This thing is fulfilled in all times, and in all places where the Goſpell is preached: for ſome do embrace it, & by it haue Chriſt liuing in them; others are neuer the better for it: but the diuell & ſin haue euen as great power ouer them, as before. But here the Chiliaſtes, of whom I told you before, do ground their error, becauſe hee ſaith vntill the thouſand yeares were finiſhed. For this ſpeech ſeemeth to import that after the thouſand yeares finiſhed, they ſhall riſe alſo whom he calleth the reſt of the dead. For to ſay they ſhall not liue vntill the thouſand yeares bee finiſhed, what is it but to ſay that they ſhall then liue? This then they take thus. That the diuell ſhall be bound a thouſand yeares, and then ſhall all the faithfull be raiſed vp in body, and raigne all that thouſand yeares vpon the earth with Chriſt. And this (they ſay) is the firſt reſurrection.

Then when the thouſand yeares are finiſhed, they take it that all the dead ſhall liue, and that they call the ſecond reſurrection. So they held that there ſhould bee two reſurrections of the bodie, the firſt of the faithfull, and the ſecond of all the dead. We doe beleue, for the holy ſcripture doth ſo teach, that all the dead both good and bad ſhall riſe with their bodies: but we are alſo taught by the worde of God, that all ſhall riſe at once, there ſhall be but one reſurrection of the body. The firſt reſurrection therefore (as it is here called) is in the ſoule, when it is raiſed from the death of ſinne. Of which S. Paule ſpeaketh, ſaying, If yee be riſen with Chriſt; ſeek thoſe things which are aboue, where Chriſt ſitteth at the right hand of God; Coloff. 3. ver. 1. Then to maintaine their opinion, they muſt ſhew that there bee three reſurrections. For if there be two of the bodies, then this which Saint Paule doth ſpeake of, maketh the third. Againe, they muſt proue, which they can neuer, that the reſurrection of the bodies of the faithfull, goeth before the reſurrection which

which S. Paul ſpeaketh of to the Coloffians, if ye be riſen with Chriſt: for the reſurrection which Iohn here ſpeaketh of is the firſt. And as I ſayd, if it be of bodies, then is the reſurrection of the bodies the firſt: which is moſt abſurd. Whereupon it muſt needes follow, that the firſt reſurrection which S. Iohn here ſpeaketh of, is not of the bodie, but when the ſoule receiueth the life of Chriſt. This is the firſt reſurrection, and it is peculiar to the faithfull, the reſt of the dead doe not riſe at all in this reſurrection. But yet the matter is not answered: for that word vntill. For if it be ſo, that the reſt of the dead neuer riſe in this kinde of reſurrection, how ſhould it bee ſaid, they liue not vntill the thouſand yeares bee finiſhed? I answer, that for this word vntill, it is both in common ſpeech and in the ſuall phraſe of the ſcripture, to ſay a thing was not vntill ſuch a time, which in deede when that time is come, is not neither. As Ioseph tooke Marie, and knew her not vntill ſhe had brought forth her firſt borne ſonne, Matth. 1. Where we are not to take it, that hee knew her after ſhe had brought forth her firſt borne. Alſo where Dauid daunted before the Arke, and Michal deſpiſed him for it in her heart, therefore ſaith the holy Ghoſt, Michal the daughter of Saul, had no childe vntill the daye of her death, 2 Sam. 6. Shall we gather vpon this, that ſhe had a childe at the day of her death? We ſay vſually, ſuch a man was neuer married vntill his death. No man taketh it thereupon, that after his death or at his death he was married. So when it is ſaid that the reſt of the dead liued not, vntill the thouſand yeares were finiſhed, it is as much as to ſay they were neuer raiſed to that ſpirituall life. That thouſand yeares was a time in which many were raiſed to life at the ſound of the goſpell: but there were many then not raiſed. For although ſatan were bound ſo that he could not ſo ſeduce the nations as he had done, yet he did harden the hearts, and blinde the eyes of the reprobate, ſo that they embraced not the life offered. Then we ſee what this firſt reſurrection is. And now that we may be moued with the deſire of it, euen to labour to haue our part therein, here is the commendation thereof ſet forth. Blessed and holy (ſaith S. Iohn) is he that hath his part in this firſt reſurrection, for on ſuch the ſecond death hath no power, but they ſhall be the Prieſtes of God, and of Chriſt, and ſhall raigne with him a thouſand yeares. This is a ſingular commendation of the firſt reſurrection, that euery one is bleſſed and holy that hath his part in it. What is greater then true bleſſednes? And euery one that is raiſed to life in this firſt reſurrection, is pronounced to be bleſſed. Then this is a reſurrection of none but of bleſſed ones. And it is to be marked how he ioyneth theſe two together, bleſſed and holy. For there is none raiſed to life in Chriſt, but by his ſpirit. Chriſt dwelleth in them, and they in him. They walke not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit, Rom. 8. They be new creatures which are in Chriſt, as the holy Apoſtle plentifully teacheth. If therefore yee doe make account of bleſſednes, if ye doe make account to haue your part in the firſt reſurrection, labour to be holy. Seeke to be found in Chriſt, that yee may dye vnto ſinne, your old man being crucified, and that ye may be raiſed vp vnto newnes of life, euen vnto true holines. For many may imagine that they haue their part in this firſt reſurrection, becauſe they profeſſe the Goſpell, and bee deceiued,

for except they bee raised vp from vnder the dominion of sinne, they be not holy, they be still dead. Then there is a reason rendred why these are blessed, which is in these words, for on such the second death hath no power. It is as much as to saye, they be blessed, for they be deliuered from the damnation of hell. For there is the second death, in which the diuels and the reprobate doe dye eternally. So you see then, that as there is the first & the second resurrection, so is there the first & the second death. The first death is the separation of the soule and bodie, which the elect doe passe thorough: the second death is in the torments of hell, into which all those doe enter that doe dye in their sinnes. And are not they right happie which doe escape from hell, ouer whom that death hath no power? And he teacheth that all that haue their part in the first resurrection, that second death shall haue no power ouer them. Here is yet a further reason of this also rendred. For such as bee consecrated to God and to his Christ, and that get the victorie as Kings to raigne with him, how shall the second death haue any power ouer them? But Saint Iohn sheweth how these that rise in the first resurrection are priestes to God, and to his Christ, and they shall raigne with him. And what is that but to be conquerers and Kings? These ouercome, these bee in the presence of GOD; who shall pull them downe from thence? But this seemeth hard that he saith, they shall raigne with him a thousand yeres. For shall they raigne but a thousand yeres? Shall not the saints raigne world without end? Ye must note that he speaketh here of the raigne of the faithfull euen vpon earth, for the space of that thousand yeares, in which Satan is bound: which excludeth not their eternall glorie in the heauens. O beloued, giue vp your selues to God, seeke this first resurrection, that yee may be blessed for euermore in the heauens.



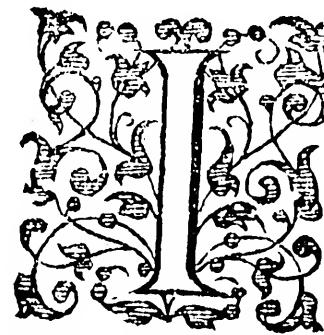
The 44. Sermon.

CHAP. 20.

- 7 *And when the thousand yeares are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,*
- 8 *And shall goe out to deceiue the people which are in the foure quarters of the earth, Gog, and Magog, to gather them together to battaile, whose number is as the sand of the sea.*
- 9 *And they went up into the plaine of the earth, and compassed the tents of the saints about, and the beloued citie, but fire came downe from God out of heauen, and deuoured them.*

10 *And*

- 10 *And the diuell that deceived them was cast into a lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet shall be tormented day and night for euermore.*



In the former part of this chapter wee had the binding of Satan for a thousand yeeres. We had also set forth the flourishing estate of the Church for that time. And now we come to the loosing of Satan out of his prison. Hee delighteth wholly in mischief, his great desire is for to do all the harme that may be: and therefore it was an exceeding grieve vnto him when hee was by the cleere light and power of the Gospell tyed vp and restrained from seducing the nations, in so whole and generall a manner as he had done. And now that he is let loose againe, it is very ioyfull vnto him, and he goeth very roundly to worke.

When the thousand yeeres (saith Iohn) are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison. I noted before, that the reckoning of this thousand yeeres is not for certaine in what yeere they began. Whether from the time that our Saviour first preached (for then Satan began to come downe) or from the time that the holy Apostles, after the holy Ghost was sent downe vpon them, with great power published the Gospell, seeing that did more restraine him: or from the time that those blessed Apostles had spread the light of it among the Gentiles, and had founded great Churches in many kingdomes. If it be the purpose of the holy Ghost to leade vs so neerely vnto a time, I suppose this last should bee it: although wee cannot stand vpon any one yeere, as to say this or that yeere after the birth of our saviour: but the more the Gospell preuailed, the more Satan was chayned vp. And we may note, that as Satan was by degrees bound vp, so by degrees, hee cometh to bee loosed. And as the holy Ghost beginneth the thousand yeeres from the fullest binding of him vp, so he saith, they be expired at his fullest loosing. The holy Apostles were not long taken out of the world, but he gave some scope to seduce, and raised vp foule monsters, to sowe most horrible and abominable heresies, by which many were seduced, but what was this, so long as many thousand thousands in all lands, stood constant and sincere in the faith of Christ, and could not be driuen from it by any torments? Within foure or fife hundred yeeres after Christ, besides the heresies that he had raised vp, he also had brought into the Church sundry superstitious deuices, which many of the faithfull and true seruants of God were blemished withall. So that hee was now somewhat more loosed. When eyght or nine hundred yeeres were expired, the sinceritie of the truth, & the puritie of Gods worship was much more dimmed, so that before the thousand yeeres were expired, great corruptions did ouerspread almost all Churches, but yet so as the groundes of the holy faith remayned. Things were very dimme in comparison of auncient puritie. The Bishop of Rome was aloft, and vsurped with great tyranny, and spread much euill ouer many nations, so that Satan had gotten much scope in comparison of that which

which he had in former times. But as yet he was not fully loosed, the Gospell euen in the midst of many trumperies, yet tooke place in many. Come then downe a little lower, about the yeere of our Lorde, 998. Siluester the second came to bee Pope, who was in league with the diuell. The histories doe shew, that at his death he called for the Cardinals, and confessed al how he had familiaritie with the diuell, and how hee had giuen himselfe vnto him, so that hee might come to that Papall dignitie. What shall wee thinke now, when such an one was esteemed to bee the head of the Church, Christs Vicar that could not erre, and to haue full power ouer the soules of men? How much did Sathan get loose now? What was it that hee would not now seeke to broach? About the yeere of our Lord, 1074. rose vp Hildebrand a most horrible wicked Pope, who had also familiaritie with the diuell, and wrought exceeding much mischief. Now the truth was oppressed, good men were hated and persecuted, idolatrie and all diuelish inuentions were maintained. Satan had now his full scope to seduce the nations with his lying signes and wonders. Now began Antichrist to be in his prime: and many worthie men in those times cried out against the romish Clergie, for their horrible impieties, affirming Rome to be Babel, euen the seate of the great Antichrist.

Then it followeth, that he shall goe out to deceiue the people, which are in the foure quarters of the earth. In this we haue three things to consider: the first is the industrie of Satan, or his readines to do mischief so soone as euer he getteth loose. The holy Ghost sheweth, that he goeth out to seduce presently: For the diuels doe burne with such hatred against God, and such malice against the felicitie of man, that they be restles in seeking by al meanes to dishonour his most holy name, and to draw men to perdition. Wee must prepare our selues to looke for none other thing at Satans hands. Then the second thing is, that the euill men are seduced and misled by him. They are deceiued, supposing that they be in a good way, when he hath blinded them, and led them into the way of destruction. Which thing is to be well obserued: for it sheweth that all the rabblements that worship the beast, or that doe cleaue to the great Antichrist, thinke they goe right, and that all are awry that ioyne not with them: how els are they seduced by Satan? In the poperie, euen from the highest to the lowest, blindnes is cast vpon them, and they dote vpon the doctrines of diuels. True it is, that the prelates and clergie men seduced the people, being themselves first seduced by Satan. As Saint Paul prophesied of them, saying, But the euill men and deceiuers shall waxe worse and worse, deceiuing, and being deceiued, 2. Timoth. 3. vers. 13. Doth not this mitigate the offence of the great Antichrist and his subiects, that poore foolish mē are seduced by subtil diuils? as hauing an intent to doe well (as we see how they boast of their good intents in the poperie) and are beguiled? I answer, that it doth little mitigate their offence, seeing the cause of this seduction is in themselves. Which S. Paul sheweth, dealing about this same matter, and shewing how Antichrist should come by the effectuall power of Satan, 2. Thess. 2. He also rendreth this cause why GOD would send this heauy iudgement vpon the world, namely, that men receiued not the loue of the truth. God sent the glad tidings of the Gospell to giue light, and

to

to bring men vnto eternall happines: and they loued darknes more then light, they loued falschood, vncleannes and lyes: and therefore Satan in the iust iudgement of God is let loose, euen to fill them with such things as they loued and were worthie of.

Then there is the third poynt, which sheweth that Satan being let loose, hee seduceth not some fewe kingdomes, but all nations vpon the foure quarters of the earth. A matter worthie the noting, because the papists doe boast and bragge so much of their multitudes. They doe despise and condemne the true professors of the Gospell, because that for the space of these five hundred yeeres, vntill now of late, they haue been very few, and in al that time also by an vniuersall consent condemned and reputed but as heretikes. Can so many nations swarue, and so long time, and a few others onely hold the trueth? Looke vpon this place, Satan goeth forth to seduce the people which are in the foure quarters of the earth. Here is an vniuersalitie, here is a catholike consent in apostasie and departing from the trueth. And if any shall say, he went forth being let loose after the thousand yeeres expired, for to deceiue the people so generally which are in the foure quarters of the earth: but did hee therefore preuaile so generally? Might it not bee that he attempted so generall a matter, but yet was restrained from his purpose? I answer, that the next words doe evidently shew, that hee failed not of his purpose, but seduced generally the nations of the earth: for otherwise how should it bee sayd, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battaile, whose number is as the sand of the sea?

And they went vp into the plaine of the earth, and compassed the tents of the Saints about, and the beloued citie. These words doe manifestly declare, an innumerable multitude which the diuell seduceth, and gathereth together vnto battaile as his souldiers, against the true Church of Christ. Wee see then that Satan is gotten loose out of his prison, and his chaine is off: the light of the Gospel shineth not, but there is palpable darknes, so that he may now perswade almost what hee will: and therefore now the multitudes are great which he leadeth awry. Here be many things offered to our consideration in this description of the armies of Gog and Magog: as first it is to be considered whether this loosing of Satan to seduce, be the same that is spoken of before, chapt. 13. where the beast with two hornes by his signes and wonders which he wrought, deceiued the inhabitants of the earth. I answer, that it is out of controuersie that the second beast which cometh with signes and wonders to seduce, is the great Antichrist. Then further, Antichrists coming is by the effectuall power of Satan, with lying signes and wonders, 2. Thess. 2. Whereupon it must needes bee graunted, that this seducing by Satan here spoken of, is the same with that which is there set forth, chap. 13. onely this excepted, that this of Gog and Magog is more generall. Wee reade there how all nations, kindreds and tongues were made to worship the image of the beast, and to receiue his marke: but that is to be extended no further then to those kingdomes which were subiect to the poperie. And here by these armies of Gog and Magog, are vnderstood all the chiefe enemies of the Church in these last times, since the loosing

loosing of Satan. Here are besides the swarmes of papists, the huge armies of the Turkes: for howsoeuer the Papists are set against the Turkes, and the Turkes against the Papists: yet both against the holy Gospel, and against the true Church: as the Pharisees and Sadduces could not endure each other, but yet were both against Christ. Then wee are to consider about the names Gog and Magog, what should bee meant by them. Some doe take it that these names doe signifie couered, and vncouered, and are vsed for to note the two speciall sorts of enemies of the Church, the Papists and the Turks. For the Pope he commeth vnder the name of Christ, boasting that he is his vicar, and that Christ hath committed all power into his hands, and so he is a couered enemy, he is Gog: for vnder that couering he hath brought in and set vp all his abominations. And the Turke, he openly denieth and impugneth Christ, and so is vncouered, that is Magog. Moreouer, they doe take it, that these names, Gog and Magog, are to note of what countries the chiefe enemies should spring: because in Ezechiel chap. 38. and 39. in which the prophecie is set forth against Gog and Magog, they are called the prince & head of Meshech and Tubal. Now Meshech is Arabia, which gaue original to the Scythians. Mahomet was of Arabia, and the Turkes of Scythia. And Tubal dwelt in Italy, where the Pope hath risen vp. I doe not see how these things can bee gainsayd: but for a more full exposition of this matter, we are to looke vpon that prophecie of the Prophet Ezechiel against Gog and Magog. Thus it is, the Lorde by his seruant Ezechiel hauing promised two things, that is, the bringing of his people out of the captiuitie of Babel into their owne land, and their instauration by Christ, chap. 37. Least the Iewes should take it that these two should come together, or as it were neere at one instant: that is to say, that so soone as they were returned home from Babel, he would send the Messias: this prophecie of Gog and Magog is to preuent that error, and to teach them, that after their returne out of Babylon, they should suffer grieuous calamities by many cruell enemies, before the comming of the Messias: and withall, there is set forth what horrible vengeance God would execute vpon those enemies. Those enemies were collected of diuers nations, but serued chiefly vnder the princes of Asia the lesser, of Syria, and of Scythia, in which was the citie of Gog, and the land of Magog, or the citie called the citie of Magog. Gog and Magog then are put for the princes of those countries, which were the chiefe captaines in gathering great and mighty armies vnto battaile against the children of Israel, after they were come out of the captiuitie of Babel. The Lord doth there in one summe, vnder the armies of Gog and Magog, comprehend all the enemies that fought against them from time to time after the captiuitie, vnto the comming of Christ. And now for the application of this vnto the enemies of the Church vnder the Gospel: wee must first note, that through this booke, as it is euident, the speeches and figures of matters are taken out of the law and the Prophets. Now when the Lorde would set forth in one summe, all the enemies of the Church, which Satan mustereth after the time of his loosing out of prison, before the comming of Christ to iudgement, there is no one place more fit to set forth all these armies, then those armies of Gog and Ma-

gog:

gog: and therefore the names, euen Gog and Magog, are here brought in, to set forth these huge armies of the Pope and of the Turke, and of all such enemies. Moreouer ye are to note, that the ouerthrow and destruction of all those enemies is so set forth in that prophecie of Ezechiel, that it doth serue also most fitly to declare the vengeance of God almightie against these. Then wee see why they be called the armies of Gog and Magog, namely, because those were the great armies of enemies which fought against the Church in olde time, and which the Lord in his vengeance did destroy.

Let vs in the next place obserue, that he sayth they bee gathered together vnto battaile. It appeareth in the words that follow, against who they are assembled, for to fight euen against y Saints. Here is the horrible crueltie of Satan, that he is not content to seduce the nations, & to leade them into error, & from the way of life into the way of destruction: but also euen for to double their condemnation, he setteth them on worke to fight against God, against his trueth, and against his Church. It is an heauie iudgement of God, that men are led from the trueth to beleue lyes, and from the true worship of God vnto the worship of diuels: but this is more grieuous that they doe not stay there, but cruelly fight against all that will not forsake the trueth, and ioine with them. Satan herein doth exceedingly blind them, and set them in a rage. You know how it is, and how it hath been with the papists, that they fight and warre most bitterly against all that will not worship the beast, condemning them to bee heretikes, and men not worthie to liue vpon the earth.

The next clause sayth, Whose number is as the sand of the sea. This is wonderful, how can this be, when all the men that euer liued in the world, put altogether, are nothing comparable to the sand of some little part of the sea shore, in number: how much lesse can this armie bee in number as the sand of the whole sea? We must note that there is a kind of speech which we doe call *Hyperbole*, which is an excessiue speech, that the holy scripture dooth sometime vse, when some exceeding qualitie, or quantitie is to be expressed. As in this place, because the multitude which Satan hath seduced to fight against the Church, is such as no man is able for to comprehend, or to reach vnto the number of them in his minde, the holy Ghost sayth, they be in number as the sand of the sea. Here it will bee sayd againe: Are the number of the armies of Gog and Magog, that is, of the Papists and Turkes, innumerable to the capacitie of man? I answer, who can doubt of that? Doe but consider in your minde thus: what a multitude of people there be in England; it is enough for a man, if not more then his minde can containe, to see into the number of them in such sort as to comprehend it. Then note that in the poperie, almost all the land were for the Pope, euen a few that were scattered being excepted, whom they did persecute. Moreover, yee must know that the kingdomes of England is but a little corner, in comparison of all the great and large kingdomes which were subiect to the Pope. Then what is the number in them all, who is able to come nigh to the numbring thereof? And yet wee are not come by many

in any degrees to the topp of the matter. For now you must count what multitudes there haue been in all these kingdomes, which haue stood in the defence of the popish religion, and fought against the Gospel, for the space of these five hundred yeares. Are ye not now come as it were to the sand of the sea? And yet yee are not come nigh the matter. For vnto the ye must now adde all the multitudes of the Turkes for so many hundred yeares: for vnder Gog and Magog are contained all that Satan hath seduced in all lands to fight against the truth, euer since he was loosed, and all that he shal seduce to the worlds end. Doe but ponder these things in your minde, and see if there bee not cause to say, whose number is as the sand of the sea. What extreame folly is it then in the papists to make such bragges of their multitudes? Doth that proue them to be the true Catholike Church? Nay, if ye looke well vpon it, ye shall finde that it doth euidently declare that they be a great part of these armies of Gog and Magog, whose number is as the sand of the sea.

The next words doe also shew the same thing, when he sayth, they went vp into the plaine of the earth. They couer the face of the earth, and not of some one kingdome, but euen of the world. And in that he sayth, they compassed the tents of the Saints about, and the beloued citie, it declareth not onely how small a thing the true Church is in comparison of them, euen as a fewe tents, or as some citie which they inclose round about: but also that their endeouour is to swallow vp and utterly to destroy all that professe the holy and pure worship of God. The histories of these latter times doe shew, that wheresoeuer in any countrie where poperie had taken place, there were any that would not worshippinge the beast, how furiously they did compass them about to fight against them. For the tents of the Saints and the beloued citie, were in all lands where any did with pure and sincere faith worship the true God, and condemne the false worship and enormities of the Romish synagoge. Reade what they did to the Waldenses, more then foure hundred yeares past: how did they persecute and scatter them? Reade also how they dealt against the Albigenes, more then three hundred yeares past: where we may see how often they assailed Raymundus the Earle of Tholouse. About those times, and not long after, wee may reade of diuers excellent men, which cryed out of the Romish Antichrist, whom they compassed about, and condemned as heretikes. Afterward more then two hundred yeares past, in the dayes of Wickliffe and after, here was much stirre in England, they compassed the tents of the Saints about. What a stirre kept the Popes and their armies against that famous Church of the Bohemians, how did they compass them about? But what followeth? Fire (sayth S. Iohn) came downe from God out of heauen and deuoured them. Now he cometh to set forth the destruction of the armies of Gog and Magog, and of their chiefe captaine also which seduced them. He beginneth with the armies, and sheweth how they are consumed with fire from heauen. It might be sayd: What shall become of the tents of the Saints? what shall become of the beloued citie, when all these innumerable multitudes doe compass them about? To answer this,

this, here is shewed that the Lorde God from heauen dooth miraculously destroy these armies, and deliuer his Church. For that is meant when hee sayth, that fire came downe from God out of heauen and deuoured them. It will be demanded: when was this? or where was this scene? I answered, that ye must vnderstand, that this is a mysticall speech. The truth of God is compared to fire, and so is his wrath a consuming fire: and who seeth not, that by the liuely word, and by his vengeance he hath alreadie begun to consume and to destroy the popish armies? In the 38. chapter of Ezechiel, the Lord doth threaten a tempest of haile, fire and brimstone vpon the armies of Gog. And accordingly he speaketh in this place of fire coming downe from God from heauen, which doth deuoure them. What way soeuer they bee destroyed, it is the fire of Gods word, and of his wrath from heauen, and wee must acknowledge his miraculous power in preserving his Church. Let not the multitude of the armies of Gog and Magog discourage vs: for they were farre greater then they bee, and as the Lord hath begun, so will he utterly burne them vp, and consume them in his good time.

Thus much for the destruction of these armies: Now touching their chiefe captaine, who hath seduced them, and led them forth vnto battaile against the Lord. Shall he escape? No, he shall not escape. He is the chiefe worker of all mischief: and therefore it followeth, The diuell which deceiued them, was cast into a lake of fire and brimstone. This is that euerlasting fire, which our Sauour sayth, is prepared for the diuell and his angels. Here shall all the diuels be tormented for their sinnes which they haue committed, euen world without end. And here are also mentioned his chiefe instruments which he hath vsed, the beast and the false prophet, these are ioyned with him in the lake of fire and brimstone: for such as serue the diuell here in the world, shall dwell with him for euer in hell, and there take such part as hee shall. The beast is all the Heathen Emperours of Rome, with all that ioyned with them in persecuting and murdering the seruants of God. The false prophet is the Popes and popish clergie, with all their adherents, which in these latter dayes haue so much corrupted the earth. Seeing this is the end of all Gods enemies, beloued, let vs not feare them, but let vs stand fast in the truth, and constantly renounce all their false worship and abominations: for they shall all downe with most horrible destruction and vengeance, when wee shall stand, triumph and reioyce in the Lord for euer more.

Dd

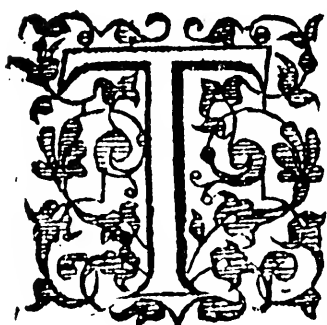
The



The 45. Sermon.

CHAP. 20.

- 11 And I saw a great white throne, and one that sat on it, from whose face fled both the earth and the heaven, and their place was no more found.
- 12 And I saw the dead both small and great stand before God, and the books were opened, and another book was open, which is the booke of life, and the dead were iudged according to those things which were written in the bookes, according to their doings.
- 13 And the sea gave up her dead, and death and hell gave up their dead which were in them, and they were iudged every man according to his workes.
- 14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire: this is the second death.
- 15 And whosoever was not written in the booke of life, was cast into the lake of fire.



His Scripture (beloued) containeth a description of the last iudgement. Wee haue had the day of iudgement figured diuers times before in this booke, but more darkly, and here more fully, and more cleerly. For that is the manner of handling things in this prophetic: first, to make as it were a darke shadow, and then afterward to draw a more lively picture. Touching the parts of this description, we shall see them severally as they come. In the first place the Iudge himselfe is described: for the first verse of this text, doth set forth the maiestie, the power, the integritie, the seueritie, and terror of the Iudge: for the things which are spoken of his throne, and of the flying away of the earth and the heaven out of his presence, are to set forth those properties indeede of the Iudge himselfe. First then that he sayth, it is a great throne: it is to shew his maiestie and power, with which he shall come from the right hand of God, to iudge the world. The Kings and Iudges of the earth, are of great maiestie and power, and accordingly haue high thrones, vpon which they sit in iudgement. But this throne is called great, by a singular height and greatnes which hath aboue all others. He that sitteth vpon this throne, is the Iudge of the whole world, both of the liuing, and of the dead. This is that throne of his glorie, as he speaketh, Matt. 25. which he shall sit vpon when he cometh in the cloudes, and all the holy Angels with him.

Then it is said to be a white throne. The white colour in the holy scriptures is vsed to represent puritie and glory. As here it is to teach vs, that this Iudge shall

Iudge.

Iudge vprightlie, and doe no man wrong. Among the Iudges of the earth Iudgements often swarue and is peruered diuers waies. And the wisest & the best Iudges are vnperfect in knowledge, and so do sometimes misse of the perfect sentence. Against the respect of persons, either with feare of the mightie, for loue of friends, or hatred of enemies, and such like, doth leade the Iudge awrie: And sometimes bribes do blind the eyes: so that Iudgement is wrested. Against all these the whitenes of this seare is opposed. Here is no spot, but all cleere and pure. Here is no impfection through ignorance. Here is no respecting of persons through feare, hatred, or loue, nor yet any peruerting of Iudgement for reward.

Now followeth that which declareth the terrour of the Iudge, in these wordes, From whose face fled both the earth & the heaven, & their place was no more found. Look what we dread and feare, wee flie from the presence thereof for to hide vs, that we may not appeare in sight: Euen so to declare the most terrible maiestie of this Iudge, the earth and the heauens are said to flie away from his presence, and as it were to hide themselves, which is expressed in this, that their place was no more found. For to say their place was not found any more, is as much as to say, they did not appeare any more, as we read chap. 12. where the dragon and his angels were cast downe, it is said, their place was not found any more in heaven. Then the earth and the heaven here flying from his face and hiding themselves, doe shew his terrour. And beloued note it well, for it is no small terrour which is resembled by this. The earth and the heaven are without sense. They be very great and mightie creatures: and they haue not sinned. Now if they tremble, flie, and hide themselves out of his presence, as not able to endure the terrour of his sight: what shall wicked men doe? what shall become of those poore wretches? or how shall they bee able to endure the terrour and seueritie of this Iudge? They shall now be at their wittes ende, and void of all succour or refuge. For vnto who shall they flie for helpe? or who shall deliuer them from the most dreadfull vengeance of this Iudge? It is not sayd any where else in the scripture, that the earth and the heaven shall flie from his presence, and appeare no more. Indeed our Sauour saith, The powers of heaven shall be moued. Saint Peter saith, that the heauens shall passe away with noise, the elements shall melt with heate, the earth and the things that be therein shall be burnt, 2. Pet. 3. And now that Saint Iohn speaketh more here which was shewed him in vision, namely, that the earth and heaven do flie his presence, it is a mysticall speech, euen as I sayd, to expresse the wonderfull terrour that shall be. It may be said, if flying his presence will serue, there be others wil flie also. I answered, that the earth and the heauens haue not sinned, and therefore they bee permitted in their trembling and terror to flie and to hide themselves, and are not drawn forth before the Iudge. But as for the sinners, euen the wicked deuils, and vngodly men, let them flie and hide themselves where they can, they shall bee drawn forth vnto Iudgement and execution. There is no darke corner for any one of them to hide themselves in. Let them goe downe into the bottome of the sea, yet his hand will find them out, and he will draw them forth. This thing would be well considered of, that there shall be such a terrour in the Iudge, that the earth

and heauen shall flie and hide themselves, that we may now in time learne wisdom and be admonished. For we see how bold men are now in committing euill, nothing at all regarding this terror of the iudge, which is here set forth. It might enter into their hearts to think thus, the Lord wil come to iudge the world, we must all appear before him to be iudged according to our deedes, his seueritie and terror wil bee such, that the heauens and the earth will flie his presence and hide themselves: what then shall become of vs, what case shall we bee in, which doe commit these foule sinnes? O how shall we then tremble and quake, and be euen ouerwhelmed in horror? Where shall we find any succour, when he that alone should helpe and succour vs is our great terror? Is it not better for vs now to forsake our vngodly waies, and so studie to please him, that we may reioyce at his comming? Most vnhappie are they which shall haue this terrible iudge against them. For how shall they be able to endure the fire of his vengeance? Thus I say, men might thinke in their hearts when they heare of such terrour of the iudge. But it may then be objected, if the heauen and the earth are so afraid at the terrour of his presence, not for any offence which they haue committed, but at the wrath wherewith he commeth armed against the foule sinnes which haue beene wrought by men as it were in their sight and view: shall it not then be a most fearefull day vnto all men? Who is so cleere and innocent as that he may come before this iudge? I answer, that this Iudge in all his glorious power and maiestie, shall not bee any terrour at all to the godlie. It is the day of redemption vnto them, they are willed to lift vp their heads and reioyce at it. For all their sinnes are blotted out, and they shall stande innocent without all spot before this iudge, their redeemer. It shall bee vnto them a day of all ioy and consolation. They are willed to long for the comming of this iudge. Thus much touching the iudge. Now to those who are for to be iudged.

I saw (saith he) the dead both small and great stand before God. Who are they then that stand here to be iudged? Euen all that euer haue liued vpon the earth euer since the beginning of the world, no one excepted. But when Saint Paul teacheth, 1. Cor. 15. that all shall not die, but all shall bee changed: and when as wee say, he shall iudge both the quicke and the dead, how agreeth it with this, that here are none spoken of but the dead? I answer, that when Saint Iohn saith here, that he saw the dead standing, it doth not exclude the liuing. For he speaketh only of those, of whom there might be doubt. Thus it is, if not any of the dead, that euer died in the world of what death soeuer, shall escape from this iudgement: how shall any of the quicke be wanting? It is eident then, that Saint Iohn saw all both the quicke and the dead in vision, standing before the iudge. This is a great assemblie, euen the greatest that euer was, or euer shall be. Here againe it may be demanded, how this is to be vnderstood, that he saith, he saw the dead both small and great. Is it to be taken of the stature of their bodies, or of worldly degrees that they liued in here in this world? For we see that some doe die very small infants, and some grow vp first and be men of great stature. Likewise we see how there be of all sorts here in this world: Some be kings, princes, and nobles: others bee in low estate, yea verie many

many poore beggers. Now I take it, that Saint Iohn doth not call the dead here small and great in respect of the stature of their bodies, but in regarde of their place and degree in which they liued. There are all both high and lowe, both rich and poore. I speake this because it is a question whether any shall rise in the stature of little infants. It is by some maintained, that all shall rise in a full stature: because at the resurrection all shall be perfect. And looke what age or sicknesse hath taken away shall be restored, and what through want of yeares is wanting, shall be added. We are not indeed to be curious about this matter. Now followeth the chiefeest matter of all in this iudgement, and that is, after what manner they shall bee iudged.

It is expressed in these words, And the bookes were opened, and an other booke was opened, which is the booke of life, and the dead were iudged of those things which were written in the bookes, according to their workes. It might be wondred how all this great multitude should be iudged. We see when earthly iudges do sit in iudgement what a long time it holdeth to trie and to iudge a few persons: There is so much a doe for proofes and euidence of matters to be giuen. Saint Iohn sheweth that it shall not bee so here: but all shall proceede according to the written recordes, which are the bookes. There shall be none other euidence. But what are those bookes, or what writings according to the which iudgement shall be awarded? It is easie to know what bookes they are, euen the conscience of euery one. For this is a wonderfull worke of God, that hee hath giuen vnto euery man a conscience, as it were a book, in which are writtē vp all their thoughts, their words, and their deedes. A wicked man hath infinite vaine thoughts and vncleane desires, night and day, they passe away to him, but they bee euery one written vp in the booke of his conscience. A vaine wicked man vttereth in his whole life multitudes of wordes, which are vaine, or lying, filthie, slanderous, and blasphemous. If hee should lose his life he can not remember all that he vttereth in one day: but in this booke they are all written vp, and shall come to iudgement. Such a man committeth sins in action innumerable euen as the sand on the sea shoare, hee remembereth some of them, the greater part he perceiueh not to be sinnes, or they slip out of his mind, but they be euery one written in this booke of his conscience, and shall bee opened in iudgement. Yea further in the vnbeleeuers there be many things in their thoughtes, wordes, and workes, which seeme to them to be excellent, which yet are abominable before God, which falleth out because they are blind and can neither iudge rightly of the intents of their owne hearts, neither in many things which is good and which is euill. Now in this booke of the conscience, the deepe counsels and intents of the heart are written vp, and at this iudgement shall be disclosed: For how shall iudgement be perfected according to their workes, if the secrets of mens hearts be not laid open? Ye see therefore that the bookes shall bee opened: there shall be euidence vpon record, there shall need no production of witnessies. But will some say, the companie will be great that cometh to bee iudged, when all that haue liued in all ages, and in all countries of the world shall bee raised and come together: and the bookes will be manie and large to be read ouer. Is not here

an endlesse worke? How long would it hold one, to reade ouer the thoughtes, the wordes and deedes of one man? I answer, that wee must not conceiue so of these bookes, as that there shall be any standing to reade them. They shall all appeare at once. All the filthie vncleannes of mens hearts shall lie open to the viewe of men and angels, and their owne conscience shall then shew vnto them their deeds, their words, and their wicked thoughts. Then shall their inwards be as it were displayed. We are thus told aforehand, that the bookes shall be opened, that we may be ware, and preuent so great a daunger. It is the great kindnes of God to giue vs this warning: and more then starke fooles and mad men we bee, if it doe not moue vs to take heed. But how shall we take heed? we cannot auoid our appearance before this iudge. Our bookes must needes be opened when we come there: there is no remedie for this. Very true, but the danger is auoyded, when the bookes are such, as we need not feare or be ashamed to haue them opened, but reioyce. For as the opening of the books shalbe to the shame, horror, and vtter confusion of one part, so shall it bee to the praise, honour, and glorie of the other part. Such as are soule within, and full of abominable vncleannes, being opened shall stinke and be reiect- ed: When the pure in hart shal see God, and greatly reioyce in his presence. Where- by we may plainly see, that our onely way is to be purged in our heart from an euill conscience. For if the heart be sincere and the conscience pure, the booke will open very faire. But alas who can attaine to such sinceritie of heart, and to such pu- ritie of conscience? Who (saith Salomon) can say my heart is cleane? I am purged from my sinne. Who is it that is not priue to himselfe of much vanitie, and great imperfections in this booke of his conscience? God is greater then man, and see- eth farre more perfectly into the heart of man then he himselfe: How then shall he abide his triall? how shall he endure the opening of his secrets? For answer to this, we are to consider what Dauid saith, Blessed is the man whose iniquitie is forgi- uen, and whose sinne is couered: blessed is the man vnto whom the Lord imputeth not sinne, and in whose spirite there is no guile, Psalm. 32. Where all sin and ini- quitie is purged away, there shall bee a faire booke opened, that man need not to feare. What then are we to doe all our life long, but to reforme the booke of our conscience? And this is to be done onely by the holy word of the Lord. There we shall learne the true faith, by which we are incorporate into Christ as members of his mysticall bodie. There is repentance taught, euen how wee shall forsake the euill workes and doe the good. There is the true light to expell all our darkenes, to correct all our errors, and to guide vs in the right way. We are for to looke dayly into this word, to find what is amisse, and by the same for to reforme it. If we attain vnto that faith that worketh by loue, happie are we, our heart and conscience shall be found sincere. For touching all our sinnes, they are washed away and dischar- ged through the pretious blood of Christ. And the fruites of our faith, euen the workes of loue shall appeare and stand vp to our praise and glorie. These workes indeede are vnperfect and full of spots, but as all other sinnes are blotted out, so the spots of these shalbe washed away, and they shall be found perfect. If we haue but the dead faith, we deceiue our selues, our bookes are not reformed, but all will bee

soule

soule when they come to be opened. For then we haue, as we imagine, a right faith, which yet is without repentance. Then wee omitte those dueties which God commandeth, and boldly commit many sinnes which he hath forbidden, presuming vpon pardon? The heart is hardned daily more & more, & treasureth vp wrath, against the day of wrath. For doe we not all confesse that without re- pentance, there is no saluation. The conscience is reformed daily by repentance. For as by faith we haue free pardon of all our sinnes: so by the same are wee dayly purged and sanctified, we die vnto sinne and liue vnto righteousness. He that is in Christ crucified, the death of Christ doth kill sinne in him, for his olde man is crucified with Christ. Againe, he that is grafted to the similitude of his death, shall be also grafted to the similitude of his resurrection Rom. 6. Then consider for your repentance, without which ye cannot be saued: because your bookes will be soule when they be opened, where that hath not beene. Consi- der, I say, first, for the reforming of your heart and conscience, how sinne doeth die in you. For by nature the minde of euery one is ouerspread with vanitie, and with ignorance, of God: by nature the heart is full of all euill lusts. There is couetousnesse, there is pride, there is selfe loue, there is enuie, and hatred, there is cruelty, with many filthie vncleane desires. Vntill these things bee blotted out of the booke, and better things put in their place, there is no saluation: For ye see it set downe, that the dead are iudged according to the things, which are written in the bookes. It shall not auaille a man to crie, Lord, Lord, if naughtie things be written vp in his booke. If thou doe not repent for thy couetousnes, and cast forth a number of sinnes, which spring from it, thou must needes bee damned. The holy Apostle saith, that couetousnesse is idolatrie, for the world- ly man doth set riches in the place of God: and so maketh them an Idol. If thy heart be set vpon riches, if thou put thy trust in them, as if thy life did consist in the aboundance of them: blot it out of thy booke, put thy trust in the Lord, set thy hearts delight in him: and despise this world. If thou hast gotten goods wrong- fully, restore them to the right owners: Doe not flatter thy selfe that thou hast repentance, vnlesse thou feele such a worke: for be it thou hast gotten wrong- fully others goods in time of thine ignorance. Thou diddest therein commit theft. Now thou comest to see, how foule a sinne thou diddest commit, and the land, the house, or the goods euil gotten remaine stil with thee: thou know- est thou holdest them wrongfully, and yet thou dost detaine them: is this re- pentance? Nay is it not greater theft, then thy former? for at the first thou did- dest steale them being ignerant: and now thou withouldest, and so euen stea- lest them of knowledge. Here is no repentance, but an increase, and an heaping vp of sinne, for ye know the saying of our Sauour: That hee that knoweth his masters will, and doth it not, shall be beat with many stripes. Then reforme your bookes, deale vprightly, giue vnto euery man his owne, bee liberall and mercifull to the poore, euen to the widowe, and to the fatherlesse: For vpright dealing, mercie and pitie, are good things to be found written in your bookes: They will make yee glad when they come to be opened. If ye be proude, vain- glorious,

glorious, and high minded: doe ye not read, that God resisteth the proude? O what abominable things are written vp against ye, in your conscience? Learne then to know the vanity of your owne minds, learne to know your selues: humble your selues, and become meeke and lowely in heart for therein God is pleased. Weepe, and lament for the lostie pride of your hearts, which is so abominable before God. And then shall yee not bee afraide to come to the opening of your bookes. Let not the haucie vanitie of your heart haue her will so much, as to shew it selfe in excesse of apparell. Ye will say, that a purple heart may lie vnder a course mantle: and therefore the garment is not the matter. That is very true, but yet the delight in gorgeous apparell, bewraith the pride of the heart. If ye be giuen to wrath, ye haue then set open (as it were) a wide doore vnto Satan to enter, and to bring in many euils. Wherefore the holy Apostle saith, bee angry but sinne not, let not the sunne goe downe vpon your wrath, giue not place to the deuil. Ephes. 4. If ye do suffer wrath to indure, Satan worketh hatred, enuie, & cruel words and deeds. So that the booke of the conscience is stuffed with many fowle things. O labour now by repentance to blot them out, and be meeke, patient, and long suffering. What should I mention particulars from vice to vice, this is the summe, search the heart and conscience by the holy word of God, and seek to roote out all vices which ye shall finde there, and to plant in the vertues which are wanting. If ye be wise, thinke alwayes of this opening of the bookes, and let it bee your dayly care and trauaile still to reforme and to amend. What busines haue we of that waight, that may draw vs from this thing? Doth it not stand vs greatly vpon to haue our reckoning bookes in good order against this iudgement? Is it not then requisite that our whole life, be euen a studie and a labour how we may die well? Beloued to conclude this poynt, let vs not hide our sinnes and our vncleannes, but open & confesse them to the Lord. Let vs be ashamed of them & bewaile them, with the sorowful teares of true repentance: for if we do not, they shall be opened and vncouered vnto our euermourning shame and confusion: seeing the bookes shall be opened. Then it followeth, that another booke was opened which is the booke of life. Of this booke the holy scripture speaketh in diuers places, and not onely in the newe Testament but also in the old. Moses praith the Lord to forgie the sinne of the people when they had made the golden calfe, and if not (saith he,) Blot me out of the booke which thou hast written Exod. 32. But what booke is it, will some man say? It is the booke in which their names are written whom God hath elected vnto eternall life. For out of the whole lumpe of mankind being all lost in Adam, God chose of his free loue and mercie, a remnant whome he would redeeme in his sonne: and the names of these are written in this booke: which is here opned, that we may know that the faithful do not come to a terrible iudge, but to their Saviour. But are their names then written indeed in a booke, which shall be saued? To this I answere, that ye must consider, that the holy scripture in the high matters of God, applieth it selfe vnto our capacitie, and ascribeth vnto God such things as are agreeable vnto men. As we see when men take the

names.

names of great multitudes for any purpose, they write them downe, because they cannot otherwise remember them. Nowe God needeth no such helpe: but yet to shewe that he hath in his counsell determined and decreed whom he will saue, it is said he hath written vp their names in a booke, and that is called the booke of life. This booke shall now be opened, and so it shall appeare, that so many as the Lord in his vchangeable counsell hath decreed to bring to life, that he hath redeemed them in his sonne, called and sanctified them by his spirit vnto an holy conuersation, and that now he will glorifie them. And he saith that the dead were iudged according to the things that were written in the bookes according to their workes. The iudgement (as I noted before,) proceedeth according to the euidence which is vpon recorde, euen according to the things which are written in the bookes, and that is according to their deedes. For what are written in the consciences of men but their workes? So that wee vnderstand by workes, not onely outward actions, but also inward thoughts and secret intents. Here is now a matter beyond all reason, how the dead should arise againe: and therefore S. Iohn speaketh more particularly of it. Men haue dyed of sundrie kindes of deaths: as some haue beene drowned in the sea: some haue beene slaine in the warres, some haue beene burnt to ashes, others haue died in their beddes. In the sea, the fishes haue deuoured them, in the warres the fowles of the ayre haue eaten their flesh, as also the wilde beasts. The ashes of the other haue beene scattered who can tell whither? Shal all these arise to iudgement? S. Iohn answereth, and saith plainly that the sea gaue vp her dead, and then death rendreth her dead that is, if they were slaine with the sword in wars, or burnt, or put to any other death and neuer buried, now they rise. Likewise helpe the graue yeeldeth vp the dead, that haue beene buried. Then there shall not any one be wanting. For that diuine power which created all of nothing, is able to gather together, and to giue vnto euery one his owne flesh and his owne bones.

And marke how he repeateth it againe: that they were iudged euery man according to his workes. Why is it repeated so often? We may easily perceiue why it is repeated so often: euen because men are hardly brought to beleue any such matter. Ye haue many horrible swearers, blasphemers, raylers, and full of filthie ribaldrie, that liue in ryot, in drunkennes, and in abominable whoredomes: tell the of this iudgement day, and of their reckoning, and they laugh. And why? O, say they, God is mercifull, wee will aske him forgiuenes. Ye haue others which liue in wrath, in malice, in enuie and debate, whose tongues are giuen to backbite, to lye and to slander, and whose whole life almost is nothing else but in seeking how to harme, and how to bee reuenged vpon their enemies, or vpon such as they vniustly hate. Talke with these, and tell them what the Scripture dooth pronounce vpon them, and they will answer, we know that well enough: but we can in one quarter of an houre forgie all the world. Then haue ye these haucie proude persons, and those which are couetous and worldly minded, so that they do oppress and defraude, they spoyle the fatherles and the widow, they bribe, they extort, they

for yeate

for we are themselves to get goods. Doe but trie these, and tell them, that they must come to iudgement, and that they shall bee iudged euery one according to their deedes, and see what they will say. Shall ye not heare this answer, or some such like? I must liue, I must prouide for my selfe, I will repent for that which I do amisse, and so I trust God will pardon me. Deale after the like manner with other sorts of grieuous sinners, and yee shall heare them make the like answer: so that we may see plainly, that men are not perswaded that they shall giue an account of their deedes. Then, as I sayd, ye may easily see the cause why this is so often repeated, that they shall euery one bee iudged according to their workes: let men therefore be fully assured of this. Let vs not be so foolish as to imagine, that Lord, Lord, and Lord haue mercie vpon vs, will carrie away the matter: but while wee haue time, let vs turne with true repentance from those euill workes, that they may bee blotted out. Such as doe sinne presumptuously in hope of pardon, know not what repentance is. He that repenteth, is sorrowfull in his heart for the sinne which he hath committed, and so doth lament and bewaile it, confessing it to the Lord, and crauing pardon for it with teares. Moreouer he doth hate, detest, and loathe the euill, because it is contrary to the holy will of God, and doth dishonour him. Finally, he doth renounce and forsake the euill and wicked deede. And all this is through the worke of grace, that his old man is crucified by the power of Christs death. Then on the other side, he doth loue entirely and from the bottome of his heart that which is pure and good: he doth euen hunger and thirst after it: hee is glad to performe it in action, and so to bee full of good deedes, whereby he may glorifie God. This is the right way, and behold how farre awry men doe goe from this: and therefore shall be iudged according to their workes: let them crye out neuer so lowd, Lord, Lord, and Lord haue mercie vpon vs. It may bee here demanded then, whether this be to bee vnderstood of both parts, or whether the wicked onely shall be iudged according to their workes. Our Sauour declareth plainly, Matth. 25. that both the good and the bad shall bee iudged according to their deedes: as, Come ye blessed of my father, &c. when I was hungrie yee gaue me meate, &c. And, Goe ye cursed, &c. when I was hungrie ye gaue me no meate, &c. For thus it is, the true beleuer, whose true and liuely faith worketh by charitie, forsaketh sinne, and receiueth pardon, so that no euill of his shall appeare in iudgement: but the good deedes which he doth shall come forth and be rewarded with glorie: And looke how much greater they bee, so much the greater shall his honour, his praise, and his glorie be with God.

Now on the contrary part the wicked man, whose works do evidently declare that he hath no true faith, shall haue all his deeds set before him: and then according to the greatnes or sowlines of them, he shall receiue his damnation: for looke how much greater his offences haue been, so much greater torment shall he receiue. The neerer he commeth in sinning to the diuell, the deeper shall he bee cast with him into horror and misery in the pit of hell. Would God we could be well perswaded of this, that euery one shall be iudged according to his works. Then it followeth, that death & hell were cast into the lake

of

of fire, this is the second death: Here is the execution of iudgement vpon the reprobate, in this sentence, and in the next. All the damned shall be cast into hell, which he calleth the lake of fire: and so die the second death. This second death is a wofull death, and lasteth for euer and euer. Goe ye cursed (saith Christ) into euertlasting fire, which is prepared for the diuell and his Angels, Matth. 25. But this is a strange manner of speech that hee saith, death and hell shall be cast into the lake of fire. What is death that hee shall be cast into eternall fire? Is death any creature that hath sense to suffer torments? Surely death is not any creature, death is not any thing that hath a substance, death hath no sense or feeling either of ioy or sorrow. How then shall death bee cast into hell? Then further, the lake of fire is hell. How then doth hee say that hell shall be cast into the lake of fire? Shall hell be cast into hell? For answer vnto these things ye must vnderstand, that death and hell are here put for the heyres of death & hell: that is, for the reprobate that shall be damned in hell and there die for euer. This speech wanteth not his efficacie, but indeed declareth the exceeding misery of the reprobate, and their cursed estate to be such in hell, that they are called euen death and hell. O poore wretches that are euen death and hell it selfe. And then finally he sheweth, that whosoever is not found written in the booke of life, shall be cast into hell. Only the elect of God which doe obey and honor him, shall escape damnation.



The 46. Sermon.

CHAP. 21.

- 1 And I saw a new heauen and a new earth, for the first heauen & the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea.
- 2 And I lohn saw the holy city new Ierusalem, come down from God out of heauen, prepared as a bride trimmed for her husband.
- 3 And I heard a great voice out of heauen, saying, behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them: and they shall be his people, and God himselfe shall be their God with them.
- 4 And God shall wipe away all teares from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, neither crying, neither shall there be any more paine, for the first things are passed.
- 4 And he that sate vpon the throne sayd, behold I make all things new: & he said vnto me write, for these words are faithfull and true.

6 And.

- 6 And he said vnto me, it is done, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning & the end: I will giue to him that is a thirst, of the well of the water of life freely.
- 7 He that ouercometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and hee shall be my sonne.
- 8 But the fearfull and unbelieuing, and abominable, and murtherers, and whoremongers, and forcerers, and idolaters, and all lyars, shall haue their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.



IN the former chapter wee had a full description of the generall iudgement, which is one great article of our faith, that Christ shall come to iudge the world. We had also the resurrection of the dead, which is another chiefe article of our faith. And moreouer, there is noted the endles torments of the reprobate. But there remaineth vntouched the last article of our belife, which is, the life euerlasting, and the description of that commeth now in the last place. In this whole chap. therefore, and in some part of the next, are described & shadowed out the ioyes of heauen, euen that most happy & blessed estate which the faithfull shall dwell in for euermore. This is to moue and to perswade vs vnto true godlines, euen to forsake euill and to walke constantly in the way of righteousness. It commeth here as a second argument with the sweetnes thereof to draw and allure, and that with great efficacy. For if neither the grisely torments of hell on the one part, nor the sweet ioyes of heauen on the other, can moue vs to forsake iniquity, and to follow the way of godlines, wee are more then blocks or stones. What a madnes is it for a man wilfully to cast himselfe into such endles misery, and wilfully to depriue himselfe of such endlesse ioyes, for a few vain lustes and pleasures of sinne, that last but for a season? marke well then beloued the purpose of the holy ghost, and let vs come to the description. And I saw (saith he) a new heauen, and a new earth, for the first heauen and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea. The first entrance here is with the restoration of the whole frame of the world. The Lord God in the beginning made the heauens and the earth, and all their hoast for the vse and seruice of man. So that man was as a great king, yea euen as a pety God vpon the earth. When he sinned, hee cast down with him all the creatures which were made for his sake, into the bondage of corruption. There is a curse laid vpon the earth, as we read Genes. 3. And S. Paule saith, that the creature is subiect vnto vanity Rom. 8. All the whole frame of the heauens and the earth do wholly incline to glorifie the mighty creator. Then what a vanity is this which they be subiect vnto, that now they doe their seruice vnto wicked men which dishonor God? The sunne, the moone and the stars doe giue their light to the wicked. The cloudes

cloudes drop downe their raine vpon the bad. The earth yeeldeth forth her increase vnto the vngodly and abominable sinners. They do not sinne in this, but yet they are subiect vnto corruption: And now at the latter day shall be purged, deliuered, and restored into a perfect estate and libertie. He calleth them new heauens and a new earth then, and saith that the old are passed away, not that the substance of the heauens and the earth that now are shall be abolished, but their estate shall be altered. Which thing is cleerly proued by the words of Paul, Rom. 8. ver. 21. where he saith, that the creature shall be deliuered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the sonnes of God. Where he sheweth also that the creature doth grone for this. Then, as I said, it is euident that the heauens and the earth shall not bee abolished but renewed. This doctrine of the newe heauens, and the new earth, the Prophet Esay speaketh of, chapter 65. Likewise S. Peter, hauing shewed that the heauens being on fire shall be dissolued, and the elements shall melt with heat, addeth by and by, but we looke for new heauens, and a new earth according to his promise, in which dwelleth righteousness 2. Peter 3. I will not enter here to dispute with what creatures the Lord will furnish the earth withal. For it may be demaunded, shall there be beastes, foules and fishes made againe? I leaue it as I said, although I take it most agreeable to the perfection of the Lords worke to the prophecie of Esay (though his words touching the beastes may be taken allegorically) chap. 11. And to the doctrine of Psalme the 8. that the earth shall be furnished with beastes. It is certaine that the beastes did agree at the first, and not one deuoure an other, neither could they be subiect to corruption and death, but through mans sinne. And as he saith in the Psalme, man shall haue all things subdued vnder him. Which as v. 2 may see is not yet fulfilled but in Iesus, as the holy ghost sheweth Hebr. 2. Here doth arise a difficult question, vpon this that he saith there was no more sea. Shall the sea bee vtterly abolished? what reason is there that this creature shall faile? hath the sea committed any offence for which it shall faile? I answer that we are not to take this according to the letter, but we are to looke how the word sea is vsed in this prophecy. In the fourth chapter there is a sea of glasse before the throne. Also in the chapter 13. the beast with seuen heads ariseth out of the sea. And there is the glasse sea againe, chap. 15. Now in all these places the sea is not to be taken for that great gathering of waters where the ships passe, and where the fishes do swim: but indeed for the troublefom and confused estate of this world. The Romane monarchie did rise out of the confused broiles, waues, and tempestes that were among the nations, which are euen like vnto a sea. The faithfull passe through the broilings of this world euen as the children of Israel passed through the red sea. When he saith the, that there was no more sea: it declareth the effect of the restoration, it sheweth that there shall be no confusion, no broiles, no waues, no turnoiles, nor tempestes in the new world. There dwelleth, as Peter saith, righteousness, there shall be no sinne, nor no sinfull thing, and therefore there shall be no effect of sinne. All things shall be pure, safe, and calme in the new world. The sea is trouble.

troublesome, dangerous, and a stoppe and separation: and to declare that there shall bee no such matter in the new world, it is sayd, there was no more sea: and yet there shall be this great gathering of the waters, which are called seas.

It followeth: And I Iohn, saw the holy citie new Ierusalem come downe from God out of heauen, prepared as a bride trimmed for her husband. The restauration of all things being shewed, he commeth more neerely to declare the blisse of the children of God, for that is the principall. Their habitation with God in the heauens, is compared to the dwelling in a citie: and therefore in vision there is shewed vnto him, the holy citie new Ierusalem. Ierusalem vpon the earth was for some respects called the holy citie: for there was the Temple, and signe of Gods presence, there was the speciall place of worshippe: but yet in that Ierusalem there dwelt many vncleane persons. In this heauenly Ierusalem there shall be no vncleane thing, all shall bee holy and pure indeede. It is also called new Ierusalem, because all old things are gone. The former things were vaine and transitorie, and so waxed olde: but this shall flourish for euer. Wee readeth that the Saints shall dwell in heauen, how is it that this citie commeth downe then from God out of heauen? The Saints shall inherit heauen and earth: and this citie commeth downe in vision to be described. Wee are to note indeede that the builder of this citie is God, as it is sayd Hebr. 11. As S. Paul also speaketh, saying: But Ierusalem which is aboue is free, which is the mother of vs all. Galat. 4. vers. 26. And he addeth in a word the glorie of this citie, when he sayth, trimmed as a bride, prepared for her husband. They trimme and decke themselues with the richest iewels that they can. Then the glorie and beautie of this citie is very great, being trimmed as a bride.

In the next place here followeth a great voyce from heauen, which proclaimeth the happines of all those which shall enter into and dwell in this heauenly Ierusalem. And the voyce beginneth with the fountaine of this happy estate, or as I may speake, with the efficient cause thereof, namely, the habitation of God is with men. Wee are assured in the holy Scriptures, that the godly shall dwell with the Lorde for euer: And the voyce sayth here, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them. And he addeth further, They shall be his people, and God himselfe shall be their God with them. Consider (beloued) what God is, and what they shall inioy that bee his people, and hee their God, and that dwell with him. The Lord God is an infinit treasure of all good things: So that this is to be obserued, that such as dwell with God, no good thing can be wanting vnto them, neither can any euill come nigh them. To want no good thing, and to bee free from the feare of all euill, is perfect felicitie, which is a principall poynt: and therefore the voyce sayth, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, &c. Now as the former of these, namely, that they shall inioy all good things, is included in this that God will dwell them, and they shall be his people, and he their God with them: so the latter, that is to say, that no euill shall come nigh them, is expressed by some particulars, in the next words following.

They shall weepe and lament no more, there shall bee no more death, nor sorrow,

row, nor crying, nor paine: all euill then shall bee remoued. The faithfull are here subiect to temptations and doe sinne, which causeth them to weepe and lament with teares. They passe through many afflictions and tribulations, they bee not made of iron or of stone, they doe feeble them, and they do weepe: otherwise how should it be sayd, that God will wipe away all teares from their eyes? The teares which they shed shall be wiped away, and they shall neuer weepe any more. They shall sinne no more, they shall not feare death any more, there shall bee no grieve nor sorrow. O blessed people that shall dwell with such a God. And marke the reason that is rendred, which is partly in these words, that he sayth, the first things are passed: and partly in the words that follow, and hee that satte vpon the throne sayd, Behold I make all things new. The first things, that is, the state in which the world is now, is very grievous and lamentable. Sinne is committed, for the diuell hath a kingdome, horrible confusion, and afflictions doe follow. But all these former things shall passe away, and the most mightie and holy God maketh all new. Ye see that the words be plaine, which open the reason of the remouing of all euill from the elect of God: and now that we may be out of all doubt, for the certaintie of the matter here is added: And he sayd vnto me, write, for these wordes are faithfull and true. Saint Iohn is willed to set it downe in writing, that the wordes are faithfull and true. And againe, it is the eternal and vchangeable God, which is expressed in this that hee sayth, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, that confirmeth it with this speech, It is done. Things to come, which are decreed in the counsell of God, are as certaine as if they were past: for the Lord God cannot erre, neither can hee alter and chaunge, neither can any hinder his decree. Looke what he hath determined before the world, he may say long before it come to passe, it is done, for it cannot be altered: and if he say it is done, although we see no likelihood, yet we may ground vpon his word, euen as surely, as if wee saw the things fulfilled before our eyes.

Now after he hath thus ratified vnto vs the full certaintie of these things, touching the new heauens, and the new earth, and the holy citie, with the happie estate of those that shall dwell in it, hee addeth certaine promises, which declare on the one part what manner of persons shall enter and dwell in it: and on the other part a threatening, shewing who shall bee thrust out, and cast into hell. The first promise is in these words, To him that is a thirst, will I giue of the well of the water of life freely. Here is euerlasting life promised vnder a figurative speech, which is, that it shall be giuen vnto men to drinke of the well of the water of life. Men for their vse in this naturall life, doe draw waters out of welles, and fresh springs. Accordingly he speaketh here of the spirituall life which is giuen of God in Christ: The Lord God is the fountaine of liuing waters, and he hath put the life into his sonne, who is the well of the waters of life vnto vs. For thus he speaketh of himselfe: If any man thirst, let him come vnto me and drinke: He that beleeueth in me, as faith the scripture, out of his belly shall flowe riuers of water of life. Ioh. 7. vers. 37. 38. What the waters of life are, the Euangelist sheweth in the next verse of that seventh chapter, saying, this spake he of the spirit, that they which beleeued in him should

should receiue. It is then a spirituall and an heauenly life which is here promised. And ye must obserue, that it is giuen freely. If it were by mans desert, how should it be sayd, I will giue him of the well of the water of life freely? Is that giuen freely, which me do earne, & may challenge as their due? Indeed y^e holy Scriptures sometimes vse this phrase, that men are to buy those spirituall things. As in Esay. 55. All that thirst are called to the waters, they are willed to come and buy. But it is added, that they may buy without siluer, and without any price: they buy for nothing. True it is, that he which forsaketh, and is readie to loose all earthly pleasures and commodities to attaine to the ioyes of heauen, may after a sort be sayd to buy them. Yet neuertheless, the Lorde giueth them freely: eternall life is the gift of God.

Now the chiefe thing that wee are to marke dooth yet remaine, and that is to whom the Lord will giue to drinke of the well of the water of life, which is expressed in one word, to him that is a thirst. The Lord promisseth to giue the waters of life: but to no one, but to such as be a thirst. The meaning of this is plaine, that there shall not any be partaker of this heauenly blessing, but such as doe earnestly couet and seeke after it. When a man is in a great heate, and sore a thirst, ye know what a vehement desire hee hath of somewhat to quench his thirst. And so the Lord to expresse the vehement desire of heauenly and spirituall things which is in the faithfull, he calleth it thirst. Ye know how our Sauour speaketh, Matth. 5. Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. The Lord God offreth exceeding great and precious things: such as do not thirst after them, are despisers, and doe set light by them, and no despiser shall be partaker of the heauenly glorie. Ye know the parable of the king that married his sonne, and sent forth to call them that were bidden, and how they being addicted to their worldly cares and pleasures, set light and made excuses. Matth. 22. Luk. 14. which men neuer taste of that supper. Also yee know what the Virgin Mary sayth in her song: He hath filled the hungrie with good things, & the rich he sent away emptie. Who are those rich, but all they that are full within themselves, and doe not feelee their wants? Then is it euident (beloued) that the first steppe vnto true blessednes, is to knowe and to feelee our miserie. For before such time as wee feelee our wretchednes, even what wee are subiect vnto through our sinnes, wee cannot couet remedie. For who seeketh remedie for that euill which he doth not feelee nor feare? If wee come indeede for to see and to feelee how cursed wee are in our vncleannes, and withall to know that the Lord hath giuen a remedie, we shall vehemently thirst after the same, even as after liuing waters for to refresh vs. Wil not a wise man then enquire how he may know his miserie, and so be brought to thirst after the liuing waters? Surely (as I sayd) it is the first steppe. We are in our selues full of all vncleannes, and such as doth make vs lothsome and abominable before the Lord God: but we are so blind that we doe not perceiue so much, but swell in pride, as if we were very excellent, and despise the saluation of God. He therefore that will know himselfe, must come to the word of God: for by that he shall see what he is. There is cleere light, there is puritie and cleannes required: there a man shall

shall finde out all the foule sores and deformities of the soule, and all the spirituall diseases of bodie and minde. There he shall finde, that except he haue remedie, he is vnder the curse and wrath of God, and vterly forlorne. If hee once taste how sweete the Lord is, by that liuely worde, hee will thirst still exceedingly for more. For assure your selues, that the more a man tasteth the waters of life, the more he is a thirst: and therefore the Lord dooth not say, I will giue to him that was a thirst, and hath now his thirst quenched, but to him that is a thirst. If any shall demand and say, how can that bee, that the more a man tasteth of those waters of life, the more he shall thirst? or if it bee so, what benefit is it to taste, when the tasting doth not quench but increase thirst? I answer, that the waters of life are so exceeding sweete and comfortable, that whosoever hath once tasted some droppe of them, his soule is inflamed and rauished with the desire of more, and so he thirsteth more vehemently. He that neuer tasted any droppe of them, knoweth not of any such thing, and so neuer thirsteth. And this is the reason why some men doe vehemently couet to reade the holy Scriptures, and to heare them expounded, seeking daily to quench a thirst which is in them. And others there bee which haue no delight at all in the word of God, as hauing no thirst to be quenched: they read not, they despise to heare sermons, they haue no meditation. If they did know themselves what exceeding miserie they be in, and did but feelee some refreshing by the word, they would doe the same thing which now they esteeme to bee folly and madnes in others. They laugh, they scoffe, and mocke at those whom they see to frequent holy exercises of religion. And it may be they will say, what are they the neerer for all their running, if their thirst be not quenched, but daily more and more by their liue here, the more they be blessed: not that the very thirsting it selfe is a matter of blessednes: but because the promise is, that the thirstie shall be satisfied. The Lord God doth giue some droppes now of those sweete waters vnto the thirstie soules: which although they inflame their thirst, yet they bee comforted exceedingly by them, and refreshed, in as much as they be assured by them, that they shall come to the full well of those waters of life where they shall be fully satisfied. Marke well then beloued, who they be that shall be saued, even those that be a thirst: they haue tasted, and they seeke daily for more. Examine thine owne estate: doest thou not thirst? If thou doe not, thine estate is very bad. Thou knowest not thy miserie, thou despisest the graces of God: thou shalt neuer drinke of the well of the water of life, vntill such time as thou doest thirst. What should I stand here to speake of the miserie of these times, in which the cleere light of the Gospell dooth shine, shewing the fountaine of the waters of life, and calling vpon men to come to the, and the multitude are not a thirst? Few there be which thirst indeede, and they be had in derision, and much hated. Do ye not see there be many which neuer reade ouer so much as the new Testament in their life, nor once in the weeke care either to reade or to heare so much as one chapter of the Bible? If the word of the Lord be preached euen by their doores, the least busines, and euen the meanest pleasure doth keepe them backe from hearing. Is the promise of life made vnto such?

Then followeth the other promise in these words: He that ouercommeth shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my sonne. Here is againe a promise of very great glorie and dignitie: for what greater glorie then to inherit all things, and to be the sonnes of God? If God be our God and we his sonnes, they be great things which wee shall possesse in the kingdome of heauen. Then as yee consider the height and greatnes of the glorie here promised, so marke to whom it is promised, which is expressed in these words; hee that ouercommeth. For least we might take it, that because the Lord giueth eternal life freely, that nothing is required on our part, but that we may be idle, sloughfull, and negligent, he sheweth that none shall inherit that glorie, but conquerors. Wee are in abattle, if we fight valiantly, and ouercome our enemies, wee shall be crowned: but if we be ouercome and led away captiue, as prisoners taken in the warres, how can we be saued? We haue a corrupt nature full of sinne and sinfull lusts, and the diuell worketh in it very strongly: and if we doe not subdue it, and vanquish Satan, wee are taken as prisoners and held captiue. If we doe obtaine the true faith, we shall be armed with the power of our Lord to resist the diuell, so that he shall not blind the eyes of our minds, nor harden our hearts, neither shall any euill lust that is in vs haue dominion ouer vs, but wee shall get the victorie ouer them all. This is a most glorious victorie, when we ouercome our owne corruption, and the power of Satan which worketh in it. O beloued, such goodly things are difficult, thinke not that they can be obtained at ease. The lusts and pleasures of sinne are wonderfull sweete and delectable vnto nature, it is a hard worke to deny them. It is euē as much as if a man should indure the digging out of his right eye, or the cutting off of his right hand. Satan also is marueilous subtil & craftie: we haue no safetie but continually to flye vnto the Lord our God for succour. Wee must stand, and we must get the victorie through his power, and wee must begge grace of him continually to that end. For marke now what shall become of all those which are ouercome, which the next verse declareth in these words: But the fearfull, and vnbeleeuers, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and forcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall haue their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. All these sorts of people are conquered by Satan, and by their owne lusts, and are led away captiue into euēlasting woe and perdition. It may be demaunded, are these all the sorts which are ouercome? Are there not many other wicked persons which are ouercome of the world, and of the prince of the world, and by him led away vnto hell? here is no mention of proud persons, of couetous, nor of blasphemers, he speaketh not of traytors & rebels, nor of such as disobey and dishonor their parents: here is not any word of theeuers, of vsurers, extortioners, and irreligious persons: nor of many other. I answer, that it is not the minde and purpose of the holy Ghost, to name particularly all sorts of wicked persons which are vanquished by sinne and Satan, and led away captiue to hell: but naming some, all the rest are vnderstood: as if it were added, all these and such like. Moreouer, we may note that some of the particulars expressed be very large, and may containe many: as namely, vnbeleeuers, and

and abominable reach farre, they may include all manner of vngodly men. But a little to the words: he speaketh of the glorie of conquerors, and of the endles serie of those which are conquered. And because that fearefull persons are not fit for warre, but are easily ouercome, he beginneth with them among the captiues. The fearefull are they which feare men more then God, contrary to that precept of our Sauour, Matth. 10. Feare not them that kill the bodie, but are not able to kill the soule: but feare him rather which is able to destroy both soule and bodie in hell. The holy religion and worship of God is hated and persecuted in the world: and ye haue many which will professe it no further, then may goe safe and free from the hatred and displeasure of men. These feare man aboue God, they be ouercome by Satan, and led to hell. All vnbeleeuers want power to ouercome the world, and are held captiue. Through vnbeleefe they are not sanctified, but despise God and his trueth, they be couetous, they be proude, they be full of most foule abominations, and lothsomly doe stinke in the sight of God. All malicious hatefull persons are murderers: such as be led with vncleane lusts be adulterers: witches and forcerers there bee of sundrie sortes: the superstitious Idolaters which worship with mans inuentions, that receiue the very doctrines of diuels, and so indeede worship diuels, are ioyned with them: all that slaunder or deceiue with falsehood and lyes come in among them, and are led together as prisoners into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. Beloued, if it be so, as I hope ye doubt not, let vs fight valiantly to get the victorie, that we may escape from the danger of this lake of fire and brimstone, and reigne as conquerors in eternall glorie. There is no one of vs but shall be tempted vnto many sinnes: but let vs resist manfully, our labour therein shall be blessed. Thus much for this time.



The 47. Sermon.

CHAP. 21.

- 9 And there came vnto me one of the seuen Angels, which had the seuen vials full of the seuen last plagues, and talked with me, saying, come I will shew thee the bride, the Lambes wife.
- 10 And he caried me away in the spirit vnto a great and an high mountaine, & he shewed me that great citie, that holy Ierusalem descending out of heauen from God.
- 11 Hauing the glory of God, and her shining was like vnto a stone most precious, as a Iasper stone, cleere as Christall.
- 12 And had a great wall on high, and had twelue gates, & at the gates twelue Angels.

- Angels, and the names written, which are the twelue tribes of the children of Israell.
- 13 On the East part there were three gates, and on the Northside three gates, on the Southside three gates, and on the Westside three gates.
- 14 And the wall of the citie had twelue foundations, and in them the names of the Lambes twelue Apostles.
- 15 And he that talked with me had a golden reed, to measure the citie withall, and the gates thereof and the wall thereof.
- 16 And the citie lay four square, and the length of it is as large as the breadth of it, and he measured the citie with the reed, twelue thousand furlongs, and the length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equall.
- 17 And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and foure cubites, by the measure of man, that is, of the Angell.
- 18 And the building of the wall of it was of Iasper, and the citie was pure gold, like unto cleere glasse.
- 19 And the foundations of the wall of the citie were garnished with all manner of precious stones: the first foundation was Iasper: the second of Saphire: the third of a Chalcedonie: the fourth of an Emeraud.
- 20 The fift of a Sardonyx: the sixt of a Sardius: the seuenth of a Chrysolite: the eight of a Beryll: the ninth of a Topaze: the tenth of a Chrysoprasus: the eleuenth of a Iacynth: the twelfth an Amethyst.
- 21 And the twelue gates were twelue pearles, and euery gate is of a pearle, and the streete of the citie is pure gold like shining glasse.
- 22 And I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lambe are the temple of it.
- 23 And this citie hath no need of the Sunne, neither of the Moone to shine in it: for the glory of God did light it: and the Lambe is the light of it.
- 24 And the people which are saved shall walke in the light of it: and the kings of the earth shall bring their honour and glory vnto it.
- 25 And the gates of it shall not be shut by day, for there shall be no night there.
- 26 And the glory and honour of the Gentiles shall be brought vnto it.
- 27 And there shall enter into it, none vncleane thing, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or lies: but they which are written in the Lambes booke of life.



The holy scriptures, beloued, doe set forth that the godly shall dwell with the Lord as it were in a citie: As yee may reade Hebr. 11. that Abraham, Isaac, and Iaakob dwelled in tents, in the land of promise as in a strange land, & looked for a citie that hath foundations whose builder and framer is GOD. Saint Paule also saith, that our *Politeuma* is in the heauens, Phil. 3. which is translated our conuersation, but it is as much as to say, our freedome in a citie. Now as this heauenly habitation is called a citie: so

to here it is shewed in vision shadowed forth and described, to bee a wonderful goodly citie, most rich and precious, and euery way commodious. It is the minde and purpose of the holy Ghost thus to set it forth, that wee may strue to enter into it. For men will strue to attaine vnto rich and precious things. And verily we are more then blockes and stones, if we be not moued with the glorie of this citie, yea euen inflamed, and rauished with the loue of it. But I will come to the wordes, which because they tend all vnto one generall purpose, which I haue noted, I will not stand largely vpon them.

First, here is noted who sheweth him this vision, when he saith, It was one of the seuen Angels which had the seuen vials, full of the seuen last plagues, that said vnto him, come I will shew thee the bride the lambes wife. In the 17. chapter he telleth that one of those seuen Angels shewed him the false whorish Church great Babylon: and here one of them, whether the same or not, it is not much materiall for to enquire, doth shew him the true Church the spouse of Christ indeed. There Iohn sayth, hee was caryed into the wildernes, for that whore layeth all wate: and here he is caryed vp into an high mountaine, and there seeth this holy citie: for that place is fit for the beholding of the whole proportion, & they must indeed ascend vp from the earth in heauenly contemplation, that will take the viewe of it aright. And then in a word he setteth forth the great glory of this citie, when hee sayth, hauing the glory of God. What tongue is able to expresse the great glory of almighty God?

And then there is shewed, that this citie shall flourish and continue in her excellent beautie for ever: when he sayth, her shining was like to a stone most precious, to a Iasper cleere as chrystall. The Iasper is of a greene colour, but the Iasper is not transparent, and therefore vnto it is added that which is in the chrystall, that is cleere quite through. Then both these together, the greenenes of the Iasper, and the through cleerenes of the chrystall, as if they did concur in some stone most precious, doe declare the shining of this citie. This is a greenenes that flourisheth for ever. Ye haue goodly greene things here in the world, but they wither in time, it shall not be so here in the heauenly Ierusalem.

The next thing is, That it hath a great wall and high. What the vse of a wall is in a citie, ye doe know well enough. It is for defence and safetie of the inhabitants, by keeping out enemies. The wall then is the strength of the citie. This citie, this holy Ierusalem, shall not be assaulted by any enemies, for Satan and his companies shall be shut vp in hell: but yet it is said to haue a great high wall, to represent the strength and safetie of it. No danger can approach vnto those which dwell in it. He saith further, that it hath twelue gates, and twelue angels at the twelue gates. This is commendable in a citie, that there is hard access for the enemies, and easie and commodious passage in and out for the citizens. That same is noted in this citie. The wall doth defend by keeping out enemies, the gates are for the friends to enter in by. And as in kings courts and cities, there be keepers of the gates, to see who enter: so here as twelue angels at euery gate one, to declare that there shall be no entrance in at these gates for any, but the true citizens. And those are they which

are noted in the next wordes, and the names written, which are the names of the twelue tribes of Israel. There is none which shall be saued but Israel, and therefore here are the names of the twelue tribes of Israel. Not that all are Israel (as the Apostle speaketh) which are of Israel. All are not the children of God, which are the children of Abraham after the flesh. Againe, all the true beleeuers of the Gentiles, though they bee not the children of Abraham after the flesh, yet are they his children by faith, and are as it were incorporate into the tribes of Israel. All the faithfull then, even all the true worshippers of God, both of the Jewes and Gentiles, are included within the names of the twelue tribes of Israel, and are written vp as the freemen of this citie. So that all these doe come and are suffered to passe, and to enter by the gates into the citie.

It is added, That there were on the East part three gates, and on the Northside three gates, on the Southside three gates, and on the Westside three gates. We are taught that the Lord hath his chosen and faithfull seruants in all quarters of the worlde, and will gather them from the East, from the West, from the North, and from the South, into the kingdome of heauen. Now that which the scripture vttereth touching that point by plaine speeches in sundrie places, here is figured out by the gates. For these gates on all parts are to shew, that out of all quarters of the earth, the redeemed shall bee gathered, and enter into blisse. It is all one then, of what kingdome or people a man bee, so that he feare God, and worke righteousness, the passage lieth open to him into this citie. There shall not any one faile, wander or leese his way, but all shall meete through these gates.

He addeth further, that the wall of the citie had twelue foundations, & in them the names of the lambes twelue Apostles. How is this to be taken? hath the church more foundations then one? Doth not the holy Apostle Saint Paul teach that there is no foundation of the Church but Iesus Christ? 1. Cor. 3. How then are the twelue Apostles here set as twelue foundations? To this I answer, that Saint Paule teacheth how this is to be vnderstood, when he saith, that we are built vpon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, Iesus Christ being the head corner stone. Thus it is, the doctrine of the Apostles and Prophets doth lay Iesus Christ the only foundation of the Church. Heere are therefore vnder the names of the Apostles, to bee vnderstood all the prophets, in as much as they all teach but one and the same doctrine. This must needs be so, because the holy Apostles were in the last times chosen by Christ when hee walked vpon the earth: but the Church was before, even from the beginning of the worlde, and had prophets which did instruct her. The prophets then being first, why are the Apostles named for all? The reason is, that the doctrine of the Apostles touching Christ is more cleere, then the doctrine of the Prophets. Moreover, yee may see that the number of twelue is much vsed in this prophetic.

It followeth, he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the citie withall, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. It is one great discommoditie in a citie, if it be so that the inhabitants be scant for roome: for then one doth annoy another. In this heauenly citie, there shall bee no such annoyance, but roome enough

nough for all to dwell most commodiously. Now to represent this, the citie must be measured, that the largenes thereof may be knowen. And for that cause the angel hath a golden reed to measure withall. It was the manner in some countries where those great reedes did grow, to vse them for measuring poles, because they were very light and fit for such a purpose. Therefore the measuring pole here is called a reed, notwithstanding he saith it was of gold. All things are so precious about this citie, that the very measuring rod is of pure gold, which it is to bee measured withall.

And then it is said, that the citie lay fouresquare, and the length of it is as large as the breadth of it. This setteth forth the situation and proportion of the citie by a square figure: in which the length & breadth are al one. If ye be desirous to know what is signified hereby, marke but a little. A round thing may be rolled & mooued out of the place more easily then a square. That which standeth square standeth fast & vnmouable. When he saith therefore that this citie lay foure square, it is represent, that it standeth fast for euer & euer. The strongest built cities that euer haue been vpon the earth, haue come to ruine & decay: but the heauenly habitations are durable. It is one great and speciall comfort, for all the godly to know, that their habitation is so surely founded by their lord God almightie, that it cannot be mooued. This is it which is spoken in the Epistle to the Hebr. chap. 12. ver. 28. VVherefore receiuing a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let vs haue grace, whereby we may so serue God, that we may please him. Then the citie is measured, & it is 12. thousand furlongs. This is a very large citie if ye count the miles. Eight furlongs are a mile, so that the whole cometh to a thousand & five hundred miles. And the it seemeth euident that he measured but one square, because the foure squares were equal. Then if one square were 12. thousand furlongs, the whole is foure times so much, & then the compass about of the whole citie is sixe thousand miles. Here may a question be mooued, because it is euident by the word of our sauour Christ that the multitude of the damned doth far exceed the multitude of those that shall be saued. For he saith the way is streight, & the gate narrow which leadeth vnto life, and few there be that finde it. But the way is broad and the gate wide that leadeth vnto destruction, and many walke in it. If this be so, how cometh it that hell is described to be so farre lesse then heauen? For Chap. the 14. the great wine fatte of the wrath of God (which is hell) is troden, and he saith bloud came out by the space of a thousand and five hundred furlongs. Here is a great difference. I answer that the multitudes in hell are cast in together on heapes, as clusters of grapes into the wine presse, and shall not haue large and commodious dwelling, but be there as it were pressed together: But in heauen the citizens shall haue large and commodious dwelling, there shall be no streightnes: there shall be no annoiance, the citie is capable of them all.

But now yee are to obserue, that it is not the purpose of the holy Ghost to set forth the iust, and full compass of the heauenly Ierusalem (for it is vnmessurable to our capacitie) but by this great measure, he giueth vs as it were some taste

of the largenes thereof. And this number of twelue thousand is vsed, because in this booke all is as ye may see by twelues. That number is chosen, because of the twelue tribes of Israel. The citie being of so wonderful a bredth and length, this is wonderfull that he saith, the length, the bredth, and the height of it are equal. Here is a most diuine workmanship, here is large rounge for habitation, we must not thinke of this citie after any earthly manner. For howe can any thing bee built so high, but by the almightie power of God? The wall then is measured, and found to be an hundreth fortie and foure cubites. Concerning the length of the wall those twelue thousand furlongs, set it forth. And touching the height, he sayd it was equall with the length: then this is to bee taken of the thickenes of the wall. The number of the cubites doeth arise of twelue times twelue. And this is to declare the inuincible strength of the wall. What can pearce through this wall? What can bring any danger vnto the inhabitants of this citie. They are protected with such a power of God, that they shal dwell safe so euer.

In the next place he setteth forth the rich and precious stuffe that the citie is made of: beginning with the wall saying: the building of the wall was of Iasper. Then he addeth, that the citie was of pure gold. Then next hee sheweth that the twelue foundations were garnished with al manner of precious stones, and he rehearseth twelue sortes of those precious stones, for euery foundation one. Then hee commeth to the gates, and saith that the twelue gates were twelue pearles euery gate one pearle. And lastly he sayth, that the street of the citie is pure gold, like vnto shining glasse. Here is a wonderfull rich and precious thing if yee consider well of it. For first what is more glorious in the earth, then the Greene flourishing colour of the Iasper, shining through like cleere Chrystal? And such is the wall thereof. What is there among men more rich then gold, precious stones and pearles? And then note, how the meanest partes in the citie, as the foundations of the walles, the gates, and the streetes are of these rich things. If in a citie, the walles, the streetes, and the gates bee of very rich and costly things, we looke for more excellent things in mens chambers. So if the meanest partes of this citie, as the very street be of pure golde that shineth through like glasse, which is a wonderfull glorious thing, the gates of pearles, & the foundations of precious stones, what shal we think to be the glorie, and the riches of the chiefe parts? But what shall we say, or how is this to be taken, shall there be gold, and pearle and precious stones indeed? Nay we are not to conceiue so of the heauenly citie. But the holy ghost would giue vs as it were a shadow of the glorie and riches of heauen, and for the same purpose sheweth the richest and the most precious things that be in the earth. We may not take it that the glory shall be no greater, nor the riches, then are here described, but as I said, that these things are to make some shadow & resemblance of those heauenly ioyes, riches and glory. For to speake the truerh, there is nothing vnder heauen which is comparable to these glorious things which the elect shal possesse in the kingdome of God: but these are the richest and the good-

goodliest things which come into our knowledge, and therefore the description is made by them. Moreouer, they be such things as men doe naturally couet and desire to possesse. What a great desire is there of a little gold, of a few small pearles and precious stones? Here is all gold, pearle and precious stones; and not onely so, but such pure gold as shineth through like cleere glasse. This being, as I said, but a shadow, taken from such things as we be acquainted withal, and which we couet to possesse, and comming many degrees short of the things which they do here resemble, may yet greatly moue our mindes with the glory and riches thereof: How much more then ought we to be moued with the things themselves which these do represent, which are incomparable? I may speake thus, and that boldly, if the beautie, the riches, the glory, and the ioyes of this citie do not as it were rauish and inflame our mindes with the loue of it, and raise vp in our hearts a studie to attaine vnto it, wee are very blocks. Shall men rise early in the morning, toyle and labour all the day long, fare hardly, and goe late to bed, passe ouer large seas into farre countreies and through many dangers, for to get a little gold, or a few small pearles, which yet they shall possesse but for a few dayes? And shall we vse no labour, nor diligence, nor care to attaine to this heauenly citie, where all the meanest things, as it were the pauement of the street, are of pure shining gold, goodly rich pearles, and precious stones of very great glory? I pray you thinke vpon the glory of this citie, and in comparison of it, despise all the vaine and transitorie things of this life. How foolish are they and mad, nay worse then madde, which for a few pleasures and vaine delights which last but for a season, deprime themselves of so great glory? For they that are giuen to the world, commit such sinnes, & are overwhelmed in such filthines, that they are shut out of this heauenly citie.

Then S. Iohn addeth, I saw no Temple therein: for the Lord God and the Lambe are the Temple of it. Ierusalem vpon the earth had the temple in it, builded by Salomon, which was the speciall place of Gods worship. There was the signe of Gods presence, there were the sacrifices, there was the law taught. But this heauenly Ierusalem hath no temple: for there shall be no need of any place to come vnto for instruction, there shall need no Sacraments or signes of Gods presence, for the glorified shall behold the Lord God present, and shal inioy his presence, and shall see and know him perfectly, so that they shall need no more any teaching. When I say they shal see and know the lord God perfectly, I meane so farre as the creature is capable of the sight and knowledge of the creator. For we may not take it, that any of the creatures, either among men or angels, can behold or know God in the fulnes or perfection of his glory: seeing the Lord God is infinite, and incomprehensible. We must needs confesse that a creature then can not see into the fulnes of his glorie. For can any creature reach so farre as to comprehend that which is infinite? Can a creature see into the depth of that which is infinite? The Lord will reueale himselfe so farre as shall be a full sufficiencie for the happines of the creature. Otherwise as S. Paul saith, God dwelleth in light that none can come vnto. This great in-

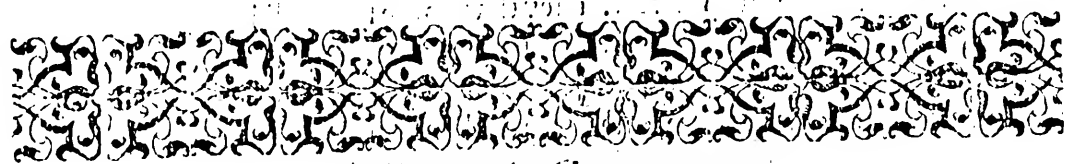
visible God is the temple of that heauenly citie, and the Lambe: for the Lambe is of equal maiestie power and glory with the father. There is none that is the Temple but God, but the Lambe is the Temple, whereby it is manifest that the Lambe is God. Moreover, the father doeth manifest himselfe in his sonne, the elect are reconciled to God by Christ, and therefore he saith that the Lord God and the Lambe are the Temple thereof. We shall know God, and we shall behold him in Christ, and through Christ we shall dwell with him for ever. O beloved, is not heere happy dwelling? Haue we not great cause to long after this heauenly habitation, and euen with impatient desire, to waite when this glorie shall be reuealed.

In the next place he commendeth the light and the brightnes of this citie, which is such, and so great, that he saith it needeth not the sunne nor the moone to shine in it. And the reason is rendred, that the glory of God doth light it, and the Lambe is the light of it. The Lord God is the father of lightes, he hath created the sunne and the moone, they be but dimme sparks in comparison of his glory. Where his glorie doth shine, where the glory and light of the Lambe is, what neede is there of the light of the sunne or of the moone? Nay the light of the sunne is so farre inferiour to the brightnesse of God which shineth in that citie, that it is as it were put out. For look how it is betweene a small candle and the sunne, so is it betweene the sunne and that light of the Lambe Iesus Christ. Set vp a little candle in a darke place, it shineth, and giveth light: But set it vp at noone in the cleere sunne shine, and where is then the light of your candle? what vse is there of it then? Euen so the sunne in the firmament is a goodly light, and shineth ful bright ouer the world: but if the brightnes of God which lighteth this citie should shine forth, the light of the sunne should become as nothing. Moreover ye know what our Sauour saith in the gospel, that the righteous shall shine as the sunne in the kingdome of their father. If euery one of Gods elect shall be as bright as the sunne (as it cannot be denied vnlesse we will gain say our Lord) what need shall there be of the sunne to giue light to them? He addeth, that the people which are saued shall walke in the light of it. This is a most ioyfull light which is prepared for all the chosen of God, they shall walke in it. The wicked shall be in darkenes and in horror euen the deepe gulfe of hell. What difference there shall be, you can easily conceiue. Men do a little perceiue how vncomfortable darknes is, and howe ioyfull and cheerefull a thing the light is: and at the lighting of a candle will say, God send vs the light of heauen: And it were very wel if we had the care to walk as the children of light. For alas the wishing is litle vnlesse we endeavour most earnestly to attaine to the true faith, sound knowledge of God, and sincere repentance. Most certaine it is that if we walke in darkenes here, committing the works of darkenes euen the wicked deeds of the flesh, we shall neuer enter into this light, but as children of darknes, bee cast into the darke pitte. The kinges of the earth shall bring their honor and glory vnto it. This is harder to be vnderstood. Shall kinges adde glory to this city? or shall any earthly glory be added to that heauenly? I

answer

answer that we may not so take it. They that come to dwell in this city, do not bring their glory with them, and so as it were adde glory to the city, neither is there any earthly pomp or magnificence which can increase the glory thereof: but they find their glory there, & the city doth bestow it vpon them. Then must we consider how the words may be taken. And that is, that there haue beene great and glorious kinges in the earth which are saued, as Dauid and Salomon with many other both in the time of the lawe and vnder the gospell. All these are said to bring their glory to this city, when they doe here as it were lay it downe. For they lay it downe after a sort, when as they receiue so great a glory in this city, that the glory which they had as kinges vpon the earth is vanished and gone. For what is the glory which king Salomon had, to the glory of the least of gods children in the kingdome of heauen? He saith the gates of it shall not bee shut by day, for there shall be no night there. They vse to shut vp the gates of cities by night to keepe out enemies, & the gates of cities are not shut by day, vnles it be for the feare of enemies that doe besiege or ly in waite. Here shall be no feare of any inuasion, and therefore he saith the gates shall neuer be shut. For when he saith, the gates shall not be shut by day, it is as much as to say, the gates shall neuer be shut, for the day lasteth euer, which he declareth in the next words, when he saith there shall be no night there. The sun compasseth about here, and so there cometh a shadow of the earth which maketh a night: for our night is no more but the shadow of the earth. But in the heauenly Ierusalem the Lord God is the light and the lambe, and with him there is no variablenes nor shadow by turning, Iam. 1. He sheweth further that all the glory of the Gentiles shalbe brought vnto it. As I said before, bee the glory of the Gentiles and kingdoms neuer so great, yet there it shalbe laid downe. And then followeth a terrible sentence that no vnclean thing shall enter into it, neither whatsoeuer worketh abomination or lies. This is diuers times rehearsed because vngodly men do sooth & flatter themselves, as though they should get to heauen well enough for all their sinnes and abominable vncleannes, and notwithstanding all their falshood and lies. They are very much deceived. And marke how he addeth, but they which are written in the lambes booke of life. This sheweth plainly that the elect of God are sanctified, purged and clesed from all filthy abominations and lies. Therefore if we will haue assurance that we bee gods chosen, and that we shall enter into this city, wee must be purged in our hearts from an euill conscience, and we must lead an holy life. The Lord gaunt vs that grace, Amen.

The



The 48. Sermon.

CHAP. 22.

- 1 And hee shewed me a pure riuer of water of life, cleere as chrystal, proceeding out of the throne of God, & of the lambe.
- 2 In midst of the street of it, and of either side of the riuer was the tree of life, which bare twelue manner of fruits, and gaue fruit euery moneth: and the leaues of the wood serued to heale the Gentiles.
- 3 And there shalbe no more curse, but the seat of God and of the lambe shalbe in it, and his seruants shall serue him.
- 4 And they shall see his face, and his name shalbe written in their foreheads.
- 5 And there shalbe no night, and they need no candle, neither the light of the sunne: for the Lord God giueth them light, and they shall raigne for euer more.
- 6 And he said vnto me, these sayings are faithfull and true, and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his Angell, to shewe vnto his seruants the things which must shortly bee fulfilled.
- 7 Behold I come shortly, happy is he that keepeth the words of this prophecie.
- 8 I am Iohn which sawe these things and heard them: and when I had heard and seene, I fell downe to worship before the feet of the Angell which shewed me these things.
- 9 But he said vnto me, see thou do it not, for I am thy fellow seruant, and the fellow seruant of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keepe the sayings of this booke: worship God.



He proceedeth yet a little further in describing the blessed estate of the faithfull in the kingdome of heauen. And first here is added, he shewed me a pure riuer of water of life, cleere as chrystal. It is a thing both pleasant and commodious, where there runneth a freshe stream of cleere and pure water through a city. And to shewe that there is no pleasantnes nor good thing wanting in the city of God, S. Iohn seeth a pure riuer of the water of life running through the midst of the street therof. Here are two great things represented by this riuer: the one is the ouerflowing abundance of life which the godly shall haue in heauen: & the other is the perpetuity of the same life. The first is euident in this, that there shall not only be life, but an ouerflowing streame of life. The inhabitants shall

drinke

drinke as of the streame of a full riuer. There shall be then no scarcity of the spirituall life, which ouerfloweth in this maner. The true life is sweete and precious, and here it is in great abundance. The second poynt is, that this abundant life shalbe perpetuall, which is represented by this that they be liuing waters, or running waters that flow from the fountaine. A standing water drieth vp and diminisheth if it be much drawen, & no supply made: but waters that do flow from a freshe spring doe continue. What would it helpe to inioy abundance of life for a time, and then the same to faile? What a griefe would ensue? But the elect are assured, that the heauenly life shall neuer faile nor diminish. They shall liue in perfect ioyes for euer, euen world without end: for this sweet and pleasant riuer shal neuer drie vp. And it is to be obserued that he addeth in the next wordes, namely that this pure riuer which is cleere as chrystal, proceedeth out of the throne of God, and of the lambe. For this noteth the fountaine or spring head from whence this riuer floweth: and that is the Lord God himselfe. God is the author and fountaine of life: this riuer therfore floweth forth from his throne. And verely here is the cause, both of that abundance, and of the perpetuall of heauenly life. For the Lord God is a bottomles, and an infinite fountaine of life which can neuer be diminished. He continueth the same for euer and euer, giuing life in all abundance to his chosen. Ye see therfore that the streame of these most pure waters do flow out of the throne of God. And it is also well to be obserued, that he saith, and of the lamb. The lambe Iesus Christ hath the same throne with the father, being eternall God with him, and the father giueth life through his sonne vnto the world. Hee saith I am the bread of life that came downe from heauen Iohn 6. No man can haue any part of true life from God, but through the mediation of Iesus Christ. And therfore yee see that this pure riuer of the waters of life proceedeth out of the throne of God, and of the lambe. So many then as with true faith beleue in the Lord Iesus, this riuer of the water of life shall flow plentifully vnto them. Then hee saith further, in the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the riuer was the tree of life. There was in paradise a tree of life which was a sacrament vnto our first parents, that continuing in obedience they should liue. So here is the tree of life in the open street of this city, and euen on both sides of that riuer watered by the same: which figureth that spirituall foode of eternall life, which all the blessed company of heauen shall receiue in Christ Iesu. And the trees bare new fruite twelue times in the yeere, euery moneth new: which doth signifie that the fruites of life shall be alwaies delightfom. Wee see that if men haue their fill of sweete thinges, it breedeth a kinde of loathing, if they haue not still change and fresh added. Wherefore to teach vs that men shall inioy the most precious & sweet fruites of life without all such fulnes as breedeth any loathing, it is said that the trees do beare fruit euery moneth. What a ioyfull thing is this? Trie it who will, they shall finde it most certaine that the great abundance of the sweetest things worketh as I said a loathing. But here where the sweetness of the fruits far excelleth all the pleasantest delights that be vpon the earth, there

shall

shall neuer be any waxing stale, but they shall continue still as sweet and pleasant world without end as at the first: they shall be as it were still renewed, which is signified, by this bearing twelue manner of fruites, every moneth newe. And there is an other clause added, that the leaues of the wood serue to heale the gentiles. What shall there be any diseases or sores, or paines among the glorified in the heauens, that he saith the leaues are to heale the Gentiles? It is most certaine & out of all controuersy, that there shall be no infirmity, neither sicknes, pain, nor sore. How then will yee say is this to be vnderstood? I answer, that the art of healing doth consist of two parts, the one is preseruatiue, which doth preuent all diseases, removing or destroying the causes of them: the other is restoratiue, that is where the disease is come, & the health impaired, to remove the disease, and to restore the health. Now albeit there be no infirmities in the kingdome of heauen, and so no vse of this second part, yet through the Lord Iesus the tree of life the saued are preserued and kept from all diseases & griefs, so that this declareth a most blessed life, not subiect vnto griefs. It followeth, and there shall be no more curse. Adam sinned in the earthly paradise, and so brought a curse vpon himselfe and vpon all his posteritie, & he was thrust forth of paradise. But here shall be no curse, here shall be no casting forth nor separating of any one, that shall once enter. It were a most heavy case if the state were such that any might fall from it. If a man should rise vp vnto great wealth & honor, & then fall quite from it, would it not greeue him more then if he had neuer knowen it? In like maner, if a man should attaine vnto the blessed life and glory of the heauens, and then haue a curse light vpon him to be cast forth, it would be more torment and sorrow vnto him, then if he had neuer bene partaker therof. Wherefore the holy Ghost taketh away all feare and doubt of any such matter, and saith there shall be no more curse. They shall remaine in that blessed estate for euer without any feare of daunger. Here bee reasons added to confirme this, as first that the seat of God and of the lambe shall be in it. Where the blessed God sitteth & raigeth reconciled to his people through the lamb, what curse can there approach? but in this holy Ierusalem shall be the seat of the living God, he shall raigne for euermore in it, no euill shall then annoy. This most high God doth raigne in his sonne Iesus Christ, and therefore he saith the seat of God and of the lambe. It followeth, and his seruants shall serue him. This confirmeth the matter, where the kingdome of God is set vp this effect followeth, that his people obey him: for where God raigeth, those must needs serue and obey him in whom he raigeth. Nowe then in the holy Ierusalem where the seat of God is, and so his seruantes obey him, there can be no sinne committed, and so there can be no curse. For where there is no sinne, there is no curse. It is then to be noted, that when hee saith his seruants shall serue him, that the seruice shall be perfect, euen as the seruice of the holy angels is. They do wholly and altogether delight in obeying and glorifying God: So shall the faithful also when they bee vnburdened of this corruption. This seruice of the Lord shall be no base thing nor any bondage: but a most honorable and glorious

ous freedom, for the seruice of our God (as we vse to say) is perfect freedom. Sin and corruption, euen the vanity of our own mindes doth now hold vs so vnder, that we can not serue him perfectly, but we shall be set free from the yoke thereof, and then, as I said, our seruice shall be perfect. Then when the seruice and the obedience is perfect, so that there shall be no spot of sinne, all daunger and feare of curse, or separation is remoued.

He saith further they shall see his face, and his name shall be written in their foreheads. These be great priuileges, and such as accompany true blessednes, and far remoued from curse. Our Sauour saith, blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God, Math. 5. To be in gods presence, and to be able to behold him with ioy and comfort, as the holy Angels do behold him, is so perfect and so high an estate, that well it may be brought in as a reason to shewe, that in that heauenly city there can be none subiect to the feare of any curse, especially when they shall beare his name in their foreheads as his peculiar. The wicked in some sort shall see and behold the glory of the Lord God: but not with any ioy therein, but with extreame horror and torment. For then shall they perceiue what a glorious diuine maiesty they haue despised. O beloued, here is a waighy matter, euen this, that we (if we be wise) endeuour with all the might & power that we can to be pure in heart, that so we may attaine to this high blessing, to see God. We are full of impure things, and our hearts fraught with euill desires of the flesh, seeke to haue them purged out, and to be replenished with the heauenly gifts and graces of the holy spirit. And now he concludeth the description of the heauenly ioyes, with this sentence, there shall be no night, and they need no candle, nor the light of the sunne: for the Lord God giueth them light, and they shall raigne for euermore. These words containe great and high matters, and haue no difficulty in them. The glorious light of heauen is set forth, that there shall be no night, no neede of a candle, nor the light of the sunne: because the Lord God who in brightnes infinitely exceedeth all lights shall shine vpon them and lighten them with his glory. Here is againe the light of heauen. And the other clause addeth, and they shall raigne for euermore. It hath bene shewed before what a life they should liue, and how they should serue God without all feare of daunger, and now in a word he toucheth the glory and honor of their life: they shall raigne for euermore. Who raigne but kings? They be then all as great and honorable kings. What shall not all this quicken and stir vp our spirites? Shall not all this moue vs to seeke after the true knowledge of God, and after spirituall things? If this I say can not moue vs to the feare and seruice of God, what are we? Howe dull and how senseles may it be thought we are? I beseech ye read ouer sometimes by your selues the description of the heauenly glory which is in the former chapter and in the beginning of this. The words are plaine and cleare. Ye shall euen at the first sight behold the richest, the pleasantest, and the most glorious thing that euer yee heard of. Let the loue, and desire of it possesse your hearts. If ye will seeke it is set before yee, God hath promised to giue it, vnto all that longe after it. Hi-

thereto we haue had the description of the heavenly Ierusalem, to declare the happines and glorie that the saints of God shall liue in for euer.

Now we come to the conclusion of this prophecie. It is a generall conclusion, consistting of diuers points, whereof I haue read the first vnto yee, which is to set forth, to confirme and to ratifie the authoritie of this booke. And ye shall see that here are foure things brought for the same. The first is the affirmation of the Angel in these words, and he said vnto me, these sayings are faithfull and true. In the second, we haue the authoritie of the high God, the God of the holy prophets which sent his angell to shew to his seruants, things that must shortly be fulfilled. Then next the Lord Iesus is brought in, who saith he will come shortly, and therefore pronounceth them blessed, which keepe the words of this prophecie. And lastly, Saint Iohn testifieth, that hee heard and sawe them. But let vs come to euery point particularly.

First, that the angell affirmeth, saying, these words are faithfull and true: it may be sayd, what needeth this asseueration, who doubteth of them? Doe not all that professe the name of our Lord Iesus Christ acknowledge that this prophecie is the vndoubted word of God? I confesse men doe in some sort acknowledge, that the wordes of this booke are faithfull and true: but if we looke narrowly to the matter, we shall find that men doe not beleue them to be faithfull and true. He saith, that the bookes shall be opened, the bookes of mens conscience, and that men shall be iudged according to their deedes. This booke doth also plentifully shew, what horrible torments of hell are prepared for wicked deedes. Doe men thinke yee beleue this? Would they then commit whoredomes, theftes, and periuries? would they liue in malice, in enuie, and hatred? would they despise God, and liue in all wicked wayes? would they lie and flaunder, and commit all filthie abominations? I will tell yee how they doe beleue. We know say they, that all men shall come to iudgement. We know these things are euill which we doe. Wee know that hell is prepared for sinners, but God is mercifull, and we will crie God mercy. Doth this booke say, that men may commit all manner of wicked deedes, and then if they crie God mercie they shall be saued? No, it sayth euery man shall be iudged according to his deedes. And doth not Christ tell vs, that not euery one that sayth Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdome of heauen, but hee that doth the will of my father which is in heauen. Yea but shall not a sinner if he repent be pardoned? Doth not the word of God make plentifull promises that way? There is no doubt but that whosoeuer hath true repentance, he shall be saued. But we must vnderstand that repentance is not in mans power, it is the gift of God. For thus it is, where there is not the spirite of God, where there is not the true faith which that spirite worketh, there is not, nor there can not bee any true repentance. Then further, this is most certaine, that where sinne doth raigne, and a man is giuen ouer vnto filthie vices, there is not in that man the grace of God, there is not the true faith. His deedes doe declare that he is void of the feare of God, his workes do shew that he hath no true faith. Then you know that the prayer of such a man can not bee acceptable, for the Scripture saith, his prayer is abominable to the Lord. This man hath committed

mitted heapes of abominable sinnes, lyeth sicke, and feareth the torments of hell, and for the same doth tremble and quake. Yea he weepeth and cryeth God mercie, what is he the better if his prayer be abominable? He hath no hope but in this, that he will crie God mercie, and what is he the better if his prayer bee not heard? The Lord sheweth plainlie, & threatneth, that he wil not heare the prayers of such wicked men, Esay 1. and Prouerb. 1. When a man hath prouoked the Lord God to wrath, shall he by and by at his pleasure haue the spirite of God and true faith? Shall he at pleasure be regenerate in the new and spirituall birth? for without that no man can be saued, Iohn 3. Beloued, let not men presumptuously commit wickednes vpon this hope that they will crie God mercie: but let them beleue the words of this booke, that men for their vngodly deedes, in which they haue despised God shall be cast into the torments of hell. And let all that will deale wisely seeke speedily for true repentance, and see if they can obtaine it. The multitude of the wicked damned soules which are now in hell, some for pride, conetousnes, and extortion, some for drunkennes, gluttonie, and lecherie, others for hatred, malice, and such like, did all know that the things were euill which they committed, and presumed vpon this, we will crie God mercie at our end. Surely if it were so, that when men haue committed all wicked deedes, they might by and by wash away all with a few wordes, the way to heauen should be a broad way and easie to find, quite contrarie to that which our Sauour hath taught. Therefore beloued, know ye for certaintie, that the wordes of this prophecie be faithfull and true in euery part: and so in this, that they which leade an holie life shall be partakers of the ioyes of heauen, and they that commit wicked deedes shall for the same, be cast into the torments of hell. The most gracious Lorde make vs wise to beleue these things, that we be not seduced. For then vndoubtedly wee shall eschew the foule vices which we see dayly committed euen with contempt of God: and wee shall be studious of good workes, that wee may enter into that holy citie, and haue our part in that blessed fellowship. Come then to the second which is the authoritie of the God of the holy prophets.

The summe of the matter cometh to this in effect, that this prophecie is of equall authoritie with the Prophecies of the prophets which were of olde, and shall as certainly in euery matter contained therein be accomplished in the time, as they were in theirs. The bookes of Moses, and of the other prophets which prophesied of thinges to come, are iustly helde in most high and sacred authoritie, as the vndoubted word of God. Then is this booke to bee held in the same account, in as much as the same God, euen the God of those holy prophets, is the author of it: for he sent his angel to shew y^e things which are vttered in it. I he touching y^e one point namely, that this booke is to stand equall with the olde prophecies, in as much as that same God of those holy prophets sent his angell now in this, I need to speake no further.

The other point is, that as the Prophecies of those old prophets were all fulfilled in their time, so shall euery thing in this. In Esay, in Ieremie, in Ezechiel, in Daniel, and in the rest, ye shall find many things which the Lord shewed by them long
FF
time

time before they should come to passe. And among other matters there was fore-shewed, how the people of Israell should go into captiuitie, how long they should continue, & what great calamities should come vpon them after their returne out of captiuitie, by diuers wicked tyrants. Ye shall find, that there was not one word that fell to the ground of all those things which the Lord spake by those his holy seruants, but that indeede euery thing was fulfilled in their season. Euen so, concerning this booke, there be many things fore-shewed in it, and they shall all be fulfilled. As our Saviour said, Heauen and earth shall passe, but one tittle or iote of the law shall not passe, vntill all be fulfilled, Math. 5. So assure your selues, this prophetic comming from the same God, no one iote of it shall passe vnfulfilled. He that can looke into the times that are past, since this prophetic was giuen, shall find that all things haue fallen out agreeable to the prophetic of this booke. And we may assure our selues that the things which remaine, shall vndoubtedly come to passe. Ioyne this booke then to the other prophecies of the holy scripture, both in authoritie vndoubted and sacred, and also for the certaintie of the fulfilling the words of it.

This latter may leade vs to the former. For true it is, that the authoritie of this booke was in old time called into question by some: but if there were none other thing to perswade vs, touching the authoritie thereof this might suffice, that euery thing hath fallen out from time to time, euen as this prophetic did fore-shew. It is our great negligence, that we doe not cleerly see so much. Well, then to conclude this second point, the authoritie of this prophetic is equall with the prophecies that were of old in the time of the lawe, and shall as certainly be fulfilled as they were. Then in the third place the Lord Iesus is brought in to ratifie it, saying, beholde I come shortly, blessed is he that keepeth the words of this prophetic. This as ye see consisteth of two branches, the one, that Christ saith he will come shortly; the other, how well it shall goe with them which keepe the words of this prophetic. But what doth the comming of Christ serue to the matter in hande? It toucheth the matter most neerely: For at his comming the full accomplishment shall be of all things that are here written. At his coming men shall find indeed, that the words of this booke are true. Then shall ye see the kingdome of the great Antichrist fully cast down, & full measure of Gods wrath poured forth vpon all his enemies. Then shall ye find, that all wicked men shall be destroyed in hel as this booke describeth. The glory of the Church shall then be reuealed: so that wee shall then bee brought to the perfect sight, that they be blessed which keepe the words of this prophetic. It is but a little while before this shall come to passe, for hee sayth, behold I come shortly. Well then, let vs stand fast for a little time, and all controuersies shall bee decided. Here is strining & contending, here is cauilling and much deprauiing of the word of God, and all to lead the people into errour and superstition, and to make them embrace the doctrine of the great Antichrist: but let men learne to know the doctrine of this prophetic, and to stand in it, and they shall find and feele at the comming of Christ, that they are therein blessed. What an encouragement ought this to be vnto vs? Is there any thing to bee preferred before true blessednes? It is said

in

in the beginning of this booke, Blessed is he that readeth, and blessed are they that heare the words of this prophetic, and keep the things which are written in it: for the time is at hande: And here in the conclusion the Lorde Iesus pronounceth the same thing againe. Shall we then beleue the popish companie which affirme that this booke is not to be medled withal? Nay let vs know that the authority of it is sacred and holy, and not onely that (for so much the papists do confesse) but also that it is a right profitable booke for all the seruants of God to bee exercised in: which shall euidently appeare at the comming of Christ. Seeing then beloved, that this is confirmed vnto vs double, let it stirre and moue our minds vnto the doubling of our care and diligence. This ought to be, for why doth the Lord else repeate it againe? Doubtlesse we are dull, slow, and negligent, otherwise these spurres should not be added: and it will be to our great condemnation if we bee not moued the more hereby. For it is the great kindnes of our Lord to shew vs wherein our salutic and blessednes consisteth, and how great a sinne is it then, to despise or neglect such kindnes?

In the fourth place S. Iohn setteth himselfe as a witnes, saying, I am Iohn which saw these things and heard them. His testimonie is of great waight, though he be but a man: for he is such a man as is firmly to be beleued in all that hee speaketh. He is an Apostle, an instrument of the holy Ghost, and so guided by the spirit, that hee speaketh and vttereth nothing that is his owne. He was well knowne to the Churches to be one of Christs Apostles, his authoritie among all the faithfull was thoroughly knowne and approued. For ye must consider, that looke what an Apostle did vtter, he did vtter it but as the instrument of that spirite which can not erre. When he saith therefore, I am Iohn which saw these things, and heard them: hee giueth vs to vnderstand, that he was both an eye and an eare witnes. He bringeth not matters which he hath receiued by vncertaine report. He deliuereth this booke to the churches, they which receiue it at his hands do know him to be a most faithfull seruant of the Lord, euen a great Apostle, which deliuereth not any thing but that which he receiueth of the Lord, and he testifieth that he saw and heard all the things which he hath writtē in this booke. And the faithfulness of this holy man doth shew it selfe also euen in this, that he for the good of the Church spareth not to report his owne fault. For he telleth how he fell downe againe to worship the Angell, and how the Angel chargeth him not to doe it, rendring reasons wherefore he might not. We had the like before in the 19. chapter, where I handled the matter, so that I need not but touch the matters here. It is to bee wondred at that so great an Apostle, so richly replenished with the spirite of God should faile in such a matter, and especially the second time, when he had beene once before forbidden. But we must consider, that the visions shewed vnto him were so meruailous, and the glory of the Angell so great, that for the time he forgetteth himselfe. Hee took it beyond that which is due to any creature, euen to bestow vpon a seruant, a creature some part of that diuine worship which belongeth peculiarly to the Lord the crea-

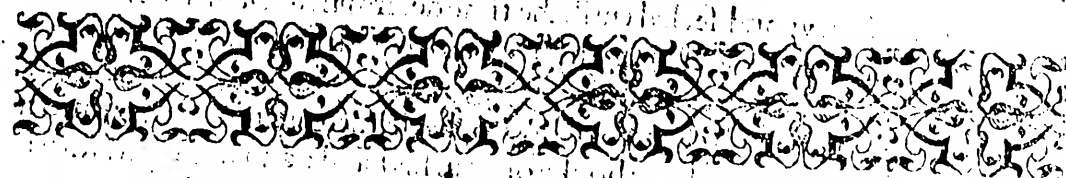
E f 2

107.

tor. For that is manifest by this, that the Angell hauing shewed reason why hee might not doe it vnto him, as namely being his fellow seruant, and the fellow seruant of all true beleeuers, he willeth him to doe it vnto God. For the Lord God is alone to be worshipped with diuine worship: and the worship of angels, offaints, vtterly by this forbidden. In the poperie they worship angels and saints, yea they worship Images, and rotten bones and reliques, and because this place is so direct and manifest against them, they seeke all shifts and caills to auoide. And whereas Saint Iohn telleth plainly, that it was one of the seuen Angels which had the seuen vials full of the seuen last plagues, which came vnto him chapt. 17. and said, come I will shew thee the damnation of the great whore, whom he chapt. 19. fell downe to worship: and likewise whereas he saith chap. 21. ver. 9. there came one of those seuen Angels which had the seuen vials full of the seuen last plagues, and said, come I will shew thee the bride the Lambes wife, whom he is about to worship, chapt. 22. The Iesuities caill and say, that S. Iohn tooke this angel to be Christ, so meant to worship him with the highest worship. For they would make the blind beleue that there is a diuine worship to be giuen to creatures, which if Iohn had not passed beyond taking it to be Christ whom he worshipped, he should not haue beene reprooued. Their other caill, that it may bee the Angell doth refuse it not as vnlawfull, but because he will not take it at the hands of so great a person as Iohn, is most foolish. This is euident, that albeit the holy Apostles touching the deliuerie of Gods word, did it so perfectly, that Saint Paul is bolde to say, if an angell from heauen preach vnto you any other gospell besides that I haue preached, let him be accursed, Galath. 1. yet were they not so farre sanctified as in their deeds in obeying the same doctrine to be as perfect as the angels. For the Angel reprooueth Iohn with none other doctrine, but with that which hee knew. Wee are taught hereby how easie the fall is vnto the worship of excellent creatures, and how necessarie a thing it is to craue of the Lord God to sanctifie and guide vs so with his spirit, that wee may obey the doctrine which wee know. For who did

better know then S. Iohn, that God onely is to be worshipped with diuine worship? Who did vnderstand better then he that angels are but seruants of God, and that it is not lawfull to giue to them any part of the worship which is due to their Lord?

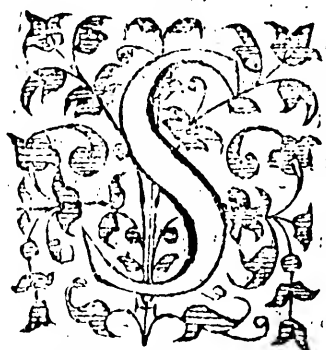
The



The 49. Sermon.

CHAP. 22.

- 10 And he sayd vnto me, Seale not the words of the prophetic of this booke: for the time is at hand.
- 11 He that is vnjust, let him be vnjust still: and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is iust, let him be iust still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.
- 12 And behold I come quickly: and my reward is with me, that I may giue vnto euery one as his worke shall be.
- 13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.
- 14 Blessed are they which keepe his commandments: that their part may be in the tree of life, and that they may enter in by the gates into the citie.
- 15 For without shall be dogges, and enchanters, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loueth and maketh lies.



SOME parte of the generall conclusion of this booke I handled the last time: and now we come vnto some other. And the first thing here is a commaundement, in which Iohn is willed that hee should not seale vp the words of the prophetic of this booke: and a reason is rendred, because the time is at hand. We are first to enquire here what should be meant by this not sealing, or that hee willeth that the booke should remaine, or the words in the book should remaine vnsealed. We know there be two speciall vses of sealing: the one is, when a seale is set too for to confirme and ratifie a writing: the other is, when a writing is sealed vp, so that it can not, nor may not be read nor knowne. Touching the former of these, we may not take it that the words of this prophetic must be vnsealed in that sense: for they be ratified, and ratified againe. Then it must be taken in the latter, that is to say, seale them not vp, let them be open for all men to reade, to heare, and to know. This is the plaine meaning: and touching this ye shall reade in diuers places of holy scripture: The Lord sayth, Esay, 29. ver. 11, that the vision should be as the words of a booke sealed vp, which they deliuered vnto one that can reade, saying, reade this I pray thee: then he shall say, I cannot: for it is sealed. The Prophet Daniel heard some thing vttered by the Angell which hee did not vnderstand, and sayd: O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he sayd, Goe thy way Daniel for

these things are shut vp and sealed vntill the time determined, Daniel. 12. Ye see also before in this propheticke chapt. 4. the book sealed with seven seales. The things are sealed vp and secret, and as the seales are opened, they be opened, reuealed and made knowne. In the tenth chapter of this propheticke, there is an Angel commeth downe from heauen with a little booke open in his hand: and hee cryed with a loude voyce as when a lyon roreth: and when he had cryed, seven thunders vttered their voyces. And when the thunders (sayth S. Iohn) had vttered their voyces, I was about to write: but I heard a voyce from heauen saying vnto me, Seale vp the things which the seven thunders haue spoken, and write them not. Iohn had receiued a commandement at the first to write the things that he sawe: and therefore when he had heard the most dreadfull iudgements of God denounced against the enemies by terrible thunders, he was about to write what the thunders spake, so that the things might be read and knowne: but the Lord willeth him for to seale them vp, they shall not be knowne vntill the time appoynted doe come. Thus you may perceiue what is meant by sealing vp words, that is, that they cannot bee vnderstood. And so (as I sayd before) when hee willeth that the wordes of this propheticke shall not be sealed vp, it is euident that he meaneth, they shall bee read and knowne. This maketh flat against all those which affirme, that the words of this booke are so darke that they cannot bee vnderstood. For by their affirmation the words are sealed vp: but the Lord sayth, they be open and not sealed. Shall not we rather giue credit to the word of the Lord, then to men? If any shal replie and say, we feele and finde, that the words of this booke are hard to bee vnderstood. I answer that the fault is in our selues: we are so negligent and careles. For if we did with that reuerend care which ought to bee in vs, search after the knowledge of the things reuealed in this booke, we should finde that they be not sealed vp, but lye open for to be knowne. The Iesuites doe affirme, that it is very little that can in this booke be noted, in respect. The trueth is they care not how little: for it paineth out their kingdome: but whatsoever they would beare men in hand, because they would not haue men see how fully the papisme is described in this booke to be the Antichristianisme: yet let vs hearken to the words of the Lord, which sayth to Iohn, Seale not vp the words of the propheticke of this booke. Then the reason is added: for the time is at hand. This is as much as if hee should say, there is some present vse of the words of this booke, therefore they must not be sealed vp. Matters propheticke in this Reuelation, did beginne to be fulfilled euen presently after they were shewed to S. Iohn. There were great persecutions and afflictions vpon the Church, and grievous calamities vpon the world. The mysterie of iniquitie, (as S. Paul sayth) did euen then beginne to worke. It was then time that the faithful should haue this booke in their hands euen open and vnsealed, that they might be instructed and armed against all assaults. They be therefore no friends, but enemies to the Church of God, they bee not for Christ but for Antichrist, which would haue the word of this propheticke kept from the hands of the people, and lie as it were buried. And for your parte (beloued) be not discouraged, as if the things vttered in it were so darke and mysticall, as that you should not bee able to attaine to

to the knowledge and vnderstanding of them: but giue your diligence with reuerend care of minde, and you shall finde that true which is here spoken, that the words of this propheticke are not sealed. To those indeede which haue no loue of the trueth, nor any desire to know the waies of God, but loue darknes, and delight in the vanities of their owne minde, all the whole worde of God almost, is as a booke sealed vp. Euery thing almost is hard and doubtfull vnto them. They are worthy that the light it selfe should be darknes vnto them, and euen that by which they stumble and fall, and are broken.

Thus much touching that one part of the conclusion of this propheticke, wherein he is willed not to seale vp the words thereof. Now let vs proceed vnto the next, which is in these words: He that is vniust, let him be vniust still: and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is iust, let him be iust still: and he that is holie, let him be holie still: and behold I come quickly, &c. One part of these words is easie to be vnderstood, when he sayth, he that is iust, let him be iust still, and he that is holy, let him be holy still: but how is the other part to bee taken, he that is vniust, let him be vniust still: he that is filthy, let him be filthy still? Doth the holy Scripture allow, or encourage, or giue leaue to men to be vniust, or filthy? because he saith, let him be filthy still? In other places the holy word of God calleth vpon men that bee filthy and vniust, to turne from their euill wayes: and here he sayth, let them bee filthy and vniust still. I answer, here is no allowance, here is no encouragement, here is no leaue graunted vnto wicked men to continue in their euill wayes: but in very deepe a very terrible threatning, if ye take all the words together, and marke well the manner of the phrase. For taking the words, as I sayd together, it must be thus: he that is filthy, let him be filthy still, I will come shortly and giue to euery one, or reward euery one as his workes shall be. That is, I will execute iudgement, I will powre forth wrath and vengeance vpon such persons. Doe ye not see that here followeth (as we vse to say in our proverbe) a sower sower to their sweete meate? The Lord threatneth, as if hee should say, they that are in their banquet, and take their delight in their filthy lusts and pleasures of sinne, and by no meanes will bee retrained, let them alone, I will marre all their mirth ere it be long: for I will come and rewarde them according to their filthines in the tormentes of hell. Then ye may see that this threatning is but in a manner of phrase, as when we see one in an euill race obstinately bent and settled to goe forward, and will giue eare to no wholesome counsell, we will say, let him goe on, he will smart for it in the end. We haue the like manner of speech in Ecclesiast. chap. 11. where Salomon speaketh thus: Reioyce young man in thy youth, and let thy heart cheere thee in the dayes of thy youth, and walke in the wayes of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know that for all these things God will bring thee to iudgement. A man would thinke that Salomon did encourage youth vnto all vaine delights and pleasures: as yee haue many men which vse to say, that youth will be merie, and thinke that no kinde of wantonnes, ryot, or lasciuious dealing is to be reprobued in them. Nay, ye shall haue many euen angry when they heare one finde fault with such dealings in young persons: and they say, they would haue youth

deale like youth, it becommeth them to follow all manner of sports and pleasures. Such men as be of that opinion, could like well of these words of Salomon, when he wilth the youth to walke in all pleasures and delights: but the latter part dooth pinch & bite them, where he wilth them to know for certaintie, that for all those things God will bring them to iudgement. If there were no Iudge to call men vnto their account; if there were no vengeance to be executed vpon sinners; if there were no torments in hell prepared for euill doers, it were the wisest way, with the Epicure, euen to followe all the carnall pleasures which a man could deuise: but when it is so that the end of them is so bitter, men were best to renounce them. Thus may you see, that he doth not allow nor giue leaue vnto men to commit sinne, when he sayth, he that is vniust, let him bee vniust still, and hee that is filthie, let him be filthie still: but contrariwise, by that phrase or manner of speaking, and by shewing that they shall come to iudgement, threatneth the euill doers. Men are bold and presumptuous now, euen to despise all holisome admonitions which the holy Ghost giueth in the word of God, and to heape vp all manner of sinnes and transgression: neuer looking to heare more of them, when they be once done and past: and readie they are for to plucke out his throte that shall rebuke and admonish them. Let them goe on, sayth the Lord, they shall shortly come to their account, and receiue their desert.

Then touching the other part of the words, he that is iust, let him be iust still: and he that is holy, let him be holy stil: There is a promise included, yea, a great promise, euen to incourage and to strengthen the godly constantly to proceed in their godlines. It is but a litle while, let them stand fast and continue to the ende which walke in the way of righteousness and true holinesse, they shall haue their reward. For I come quickly, and my reward is with me, that I may giue euery man, as his worke shall be. O beloued marke well, how that which is a most terrible and seuerer threatning to the wicked, is the most comfortable and ioyfull promise that may be to the godly. Christ will come and giue reward: a feareful thing to him that hath committed those euill deeds whose reward by iust desert, is eternall fire in hell. Christ wil come and giue reward, a most cheerful thing to him that hath feared the Lord & renouncing the way of wickednes, hath shewed the fruits of a true & liuely faith, euen all those holy works which God hath prepared for his seruants to walke in, and which of his free mercie he hath promised to reward with eternall glory. Is it not a good thing then for vs to studie dayly to please God, and to stand fast in the same, when there shall or it be long be such a difference? Is it not much better for vs, that the coming of Christ should be a promise vnto vs, rather then a threatning. For as I sayd, that Christ doth tel vs he wil come quickly, & reward euery man as his worke, shall be, is a greiuous threatning to the vngodly, & a comfortable promise to the righteous. And when he sayd he that is filthy let him be filthy still, it is to confirme the righteous in their righteousness, that they be not drawn awry by their example. Let the wicked be wicked still, be not you like them. We know what a force there is in example for to draw me from good to euil: & especially where

we

we see the multitude go as it were whole with one consent, and no harm to follow. Ye shall heare many vtter such like speeches as these: I see my betters, my equals, and my inferiours do these things, and shall I walke alone? Shall I be one that men shal point at, as one that will be singular? If God pnuish with damnation such as doe these things, there are but a few that shall escape from hell. Against such vaine thoughts, the holy ghost doth arme the godly, and sheweth that howsoeuer the multitudes of wicked persons perswade themselves that there is no harme, yet is it farre otherwise, for they shall ere it bee long haue the wrath of God in a full measure powred forth vpon them. Our Sauour Christ as ye know telleth in the gospel, how the wicked shal flatter themselves and say peace and all is wel, and euen suddenly, when they shal thinke that they be safe, shall destruction come vpon them, euen like a net that is spread ouer. For by such a comparison the holy scripture doth set forth the thing vnto vs. VWhen a net is layd for birdes the shrap is made, the baite is spread, a birde cometh alone, sitteth looking vpon it but is afraid. Afterward she seeth many other birds flocke into it, and then she is boldened and goeth in among them, so many do hartē each other: the fouler seeth his time and suddenly spreadeth the net ouer them, and they are caught. Euen so here be the allurementes of sinne, as sweet baites, the Lord God doth threaten, some man is afraid at the first, and doeth some what restraîne, vntill he seeth the multitude flocking in, and no harme to follow, but whatsoeuer iudgement the Lord denounceth they laughe and deride it, hee also waxeth bold. But Christ will come, and at the last they shal all haue, as it were a net spread ouer the. And this is the reason why the Lord saith here, he that is vniust, let him be vniust still, he that is filthy let him be filthy stil, behold I come quickly, let the iust and holy not be moued with their boldnes, and so led to commit sinne, but let them goe on till their time do come. Salomon in Ecclesiastes Chap. 9. handleth this matter, and sheweth that the heart of the children of men is full in them to doe euill, because all cometh alike to all. A godly man prospereth a wicked man prospereth: A wicked man doeth fall into aduersitie and affliction, and a godly man is also afflicted. There appeareth no difference almost at all in outward things. How merrie, how pleasant and full of delights, are many filthy men? and how they abound in al riches and wealth; which maketh them exceeding proud both against God and man, as the Prophet teacheth Psal. 73. and how this doth weaken many touching the way of godlines who seeth not, that hath any sight at all? Is it not then very needful that the faithful should be armed with this. Let them go on, let them be filthy, stand you fast in the right way of godlines and be not discouraged, I wil shortly come to iudgement, and they shall haue their reward euen according as their workes haue beene. Let me here speake thus much vnto yee, and iudge in your selues whether it be the counsell of man or the counsell of the holy ghost. If it be but the counsell of man, despise it as vaine: but if yee can not denie but that it is the most wholesome aduise which the spirit of the Lord giueth, then take heede how you set light by it. Hee wilth him that is entred into a good way

way

way to stand fast and to continue. We see many that haue made some shew so that there was great hope of them, but they are fallen backe, and returned euen as a dog to his vomitte, and as the sow that was washed, to the wallowing in the myre 2. Pet. 2. It had been better for them if they had neuer knowen the trueth, the so to turne from the holy commandment. It is but a little while, but he that cometh will come and will not tarry. Can wee not hold out for a little time? I know it is heard, our nature is so vaine, we are so corrupt, so light and so inconstant: and the temptations and allurements be so many and so forcible: but seeing the end will be so good to the iust, & so grievous to the wicked, stand fast. If it were but to escape the damnation of hel, it should be of waight enough to moue vs: then how much more that continuing in the true feare of God, and glorifying him with good works, we shall be partakers of the ioyes of heauen? The glory is exceeding great which is set before vs, if wee can strue to enter. And if it were so that man should but lose that glorie through their euill life, it were a great matter; but when beside that losse, they go also into hel euen into a gulf of endles miseries, what a madness is it? I leaue it to your consideration, wishing euery man to thinke vpon these words, He that is vniust, let him be vniust still: He that is filthy, let him be filthy still: He that is iust, let him be iust still: He that is holy, let him be holy still. And behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to giue vnto euery one as his worke shall bee. If ye would but thinke vpon these things, it might make you carefull and warie, but because we let slippe out of our minde the day of iudgement, and make account that our sinnes passe away euen as they bee committed, and shall neuer be called into question, we are bold not onely to neglect those holy and iust deedes which the Lord hath appointed vs to walke in, by which we should glorifie the name of his sonne Iesus Christ which we do professe and adorne the holy gospel: but also we do fall into sundry offences whereby we dishonour the Lord and our profession. Well, we are much called vpon and put in minde in the holy scriptures touching these matters, & I pray you let it moue vs seriously to lay faster hold of the way of truth & righteousness. Shall wicked & vngodly men be more constant in their vngodlines then we in the feare of the Lorde? They serue the deuill, they serue their lustes, their reward is in hel: we are to serue the Lord in holinesse, and to be rewarded with glory in heauen: shall they be more forward & constant in the seruice of that their Lord the deuill, the we in the seruice of our gracious God? let it shame vs, for of such a thing we ought to bee ashamed indeed. And moreover if they bee so forward for such a reward as is bestowed in hell, shall wee be slacke for the reward which is in heauen? Again, let euery one of vs make this account, that if we wil be aduised by the holy ghost & follow his counsel, whē he sayth he that is holy, let him be holy still: we must not continue weak, but we must grow vp in Christ and become strong men. For what is the cause that many fall & that so grievously, but that they contented themselues in their weak estate and did not labour to growe vp and to become strong? They professed the gospel, & neuer consider, how farre the power of it had proceeded in them.

They

They tooke some delight, and rested therein: but they should haue seen how it did subdue pride, selfe loue, vaine glory, with a number of such like euill and filthy affections which are deeply rooted in mans nature. For beloued when he saith, he that is holy let him be holy still, it aduertiseth vs to gather strength that we may stand euen in the greatest temptations. If a man be giuen to anger, and do not in time seeke to subdue it, ye know what the holy Apostle teacheth: he shall giue place to the deuill, and so the deuill entring leadeth him into many sinnes. I might here enter into many particulars, but know that except ye strue to subdue in all, ye hazard your selues: for looke wherein ye be weak, the temptation wil come there at one time or another: and when men are fallen, it is no easie rising againe. Herein therefore we ought alwaies to be more then fearful, least there should remaine any secret corrupt root in our heart. The Lord purge our hearts from al those euill desires which we are by nature so stuffed & fraught withal, and fill vs with the graces of his spirit, that we may bee strong and constant in true godlines euen to the end. And thus much for this point of the conclusion. Let vs proceed to the next.

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ende, the first and the last. This is added as a ratification of the former words. They be not the wordes of a man, that either is not able to performe that which he speaketh, or else may alter and change his minde, when he sayeth he will come and giue vnto euery one as his worke shall be: but they bee the wordes of him that is eternall, almightie, and vchangeable. And therefore he sayth, I am Alpha and Omega. Alpha is the first of the Greeke letters, and Omega is the last. Wherefore he expoundeth it saying, the first and the last, the beginning and the ende. In the first Chapter of this Prophecie, the Lord sayd, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last. Whereby you see it euident that he is eternall God equal with the father. How is he else the beginning and the ende? Howe is he otherwise the first and the last? Then may yee see why it is here added againe, euen as I sayd, for confirmation. When wee heare of great reward promised at the coming of our Lorde, vnto all those which walke in the trueth, it doeth not so much moue vs, nor affect vs as it ought to doe, and why? euen because we doe not giue so firme credite therunto as we ought. Wee doe not thoroughly way and consider that the promise is made by him that is Alpha and Omega, euen the first and the last, who is almightie and vchangeable. Also when the threatning is vttered against the euill doers, that he will recompence vnto them vengeance for al their euill deedes, it is despised, and neglected, euen as if it came but from a mortall man. Therefore we are here assured, that there shall no iote fall to the ground of the terrible vengeance denounced against the wicked, in as much as it proceedeth not from a mortall man, but from him that is Alpha and Omega. And herein because we are dull, marke how the promise and the threatning are againe repeated. First, the promise in these words, Blessed are they that keepe his commandments, that their part may be in the tree of life, and that they may enter in by the gates into the citie. Touching the tree of life, ye heard of it before, where

he

he speaketh of the riuer that runneth through the citie. Also we haue seene what a priuiledge it is to be admitted to enter into that heauenly Ierusalem. And here we learne againe who shall enter, and so who shall bee blessed, euen all that walke in the feare of God, and keepe his commandements. We are generally of the minde that a few words shall carry away the matter, as if me for saying Lord, Lord, shuld enter into the kingdom of heauen, but we are stil and often admonished and told, that none shall enter but such as doe the will of God. Is it not then our part first to be studious to learne to know the commandement, the ordinances and wayes of the Lord our God? For if we doe not know them, how shall we walke in them? Can a man walke in those waies which he doth not know nor vnderstand? Or shal a man bee thought to haue any loue or desire to walke in that way, which he seeketh not to know?

Then secondly, when we doe vnderstand the commaundements of God, it is our dutie to put them in practise, or els we are neuer the better; nay we are in worse case then before: for you know what our Sauour saith in the Gospell, the seruant that knoweth his masters will and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes. And Saint Iames handleth this point in the first chapter of his Epistle, where hauing shewed what benefite wee receiue by the worde of truth, namely, that we are begotten by it, he by and by exhorteth men to be swift to heare. And then further he willet, that we should be doers of the word, and not hearers onely, deceiuing our selues. And then by a similitude of one that beholdeth his face in a glasse, and by and by goeth his way and forgetteth what manner of one hee is, hee teacheth what a vaine thing it is to be hearers of the worde of God onely, and not doers. Afterward he telleth what a blessed thing it is for a man to be both a very diligent student in the law of God, and also a doer of the same. Let vs then receiue admonition. Let vs become wise vnto saluation: for they that do this which is here taught, become wise vnto saluation: they shall haue their part in the tree of life, they shall enter in by the gates into the citie. And surely there is no greater follie and madnes, then for men to content and satisfie themselves with a bare hearing of the word of God preached. Doth not our Sauour say, Blessed are they that heare the word of God and keepe it? What doth hee meane by keeping of it? Is it that they keepe it in memorie, to dispute and talke of it, and no more? Nay they are not said to keepe it, which do not in deeds performe it. And the Lord saith, whosoever doth the will of my father which is in heauen; he is my brother, sister & mother, Math. 12. vers. 50. Let no man then any longer be deceiued about this point, but know that onely such as doe the will of God shall be blessed for ever more.

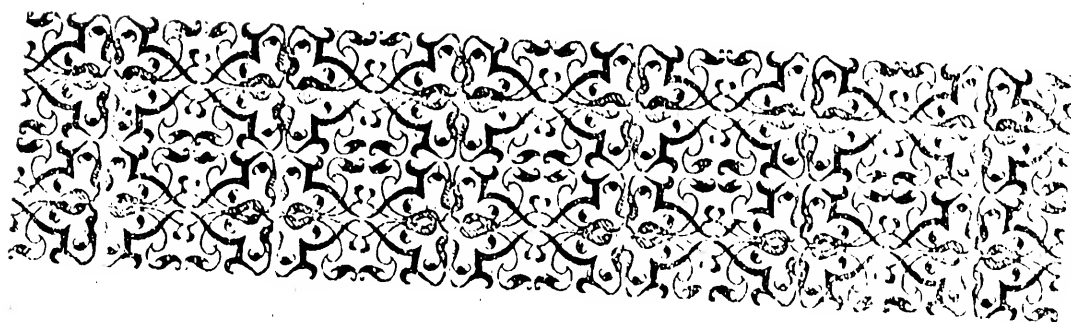
Then follo weth the threatning, For without shall be dogs and enchaunters, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loueth and maketh lie. Here are the companie that shall not enter into the holy city but shalbe without, they shall be in hell. As the one part who keepe the commandements of God are blessed, so these filthie persons are accursed. But let vs now looke vpon the wordes, he beginneth with dogges. What are these dogges? Shall dogges go to hell? Beloued, ye may not take it that hee meaneth these beastes which are called

dogs

dogs. It may seeme a very hard and a very vncharitable speech to call men dogges: but when the holy Ghost doth it, we may be bold. This ye may note, that they be wonderfull abominable and vile in the sight of the Lord, whom hee calleth dogs. How be they degenerate; how haue they forgotten themselves, which are turned from men into dogs? But let vs see who they bee whom the holy scripture calleth dogs.

First, the vnskilfull and couetous priests are called dumme dogs, and greedie dogs, Esay 56. So soule a sinne it is to haue the charge ouer the Lords people, and not faithfully to feed and guide them. Saint Paul (speaking of the false Apostles, which corrupted the simplicitie of the Gospell) willet the Philippians to beware of dogs, to beware of euill workmen, Philip. 3. Our Sauour Christ giueth this precept, Giue not holy things to dogs, and cast not your pearles before swine, least they tread them vnder their feete, and the other turne againe and rent you, Matth. 7. vers. 6. where ye are to note that there bee some men who when the Gospell is preached vnto them are not moued with wrath, but onely as it were neglect and despise the same, who are likened therefore vnto swine, and they are called swine of the Gospell. Others there bee who when the gospell is preached, are moued with rage and furie, because they can not abide the pure doctrine. These flie vpon those that preach it. They rend and teare them. They be called dogs. These in old time murdered the holy prophets that spake in the name of the Lord. These haue put the Saints and Martyrs of Christ to death. These doe daily barke at the ministers and professors of the gospell. Vnder a Christian prince where the holy word of God is set forth, these dogs do in some sort (at the least many of them) conforme themselves to the outward profession of it: and because the light of Gods truth doth conuince them, they dare not for shame find fault with that, but say they reuerence it, when as indeed they abhorre it in their hearts, and seeke to finde faultes with those that doe publish it. How filthie and abominable these dogs are before the Lord, who is able to declare? Ye may read what our Sauour saith to his Apostles when he sent them forth at the first, how it should bee easier for Sodome and Gomorra in the day of iudgement, then for those which should refuse to heare their doctrine, Math. 10. Then how horrible is the sinne, not onely to refuse, but also to be moued with wrath, euen to hate and persecute those that doe preach it? Yee shall see many of these vncleane and prophane men in all places, which euen gnash their teeth, that they can not like dogs runne vpon those that reprove their euill works, and like dogs rend and teare them. As these doe now vtter many hard and slanderous speeches, and many reproches against the ministers of the gospell, so would they if time did serue, persecute them euen to the death. They be like dogs that are chained vp so long as the gospell is maintained by the Christian prince. Here are ioyned with these dogs, first inchaunters, then whoremongers, then murderers, then idolaters, and lastly, whosoever loueth & maketh lies. There be sundry sortes of inchaunters, sorcerers, witches, and such as deale by the deuill, and by diuells. And how horrible and monstrous a thing it is for men to deale and to be in league

league with deuils, which are the sworne enemies of God, ye may easily consider. Whoredome is little or no euill in the sight of many. They esteeme it as a matter to laugh at, and many are come to that impudencie that they can euen glorie and boast of it: But how abominable a thing it is before God, is seene by this, that the whoremongers are here associate with dogges and enchaunters, and the rest here named. Then also come in murderers, who are all those, as Saint Iohn plainly sheweth in his Epistle, that doe liue in hatred. The superstitious Idolaters perswade themselves in their blinde deuotion, and in their good intentes (as they call them) that they be very holy persons: and you may see here, that they bee euen as holy as murderers, whoremongers, witches and dogges with whom they be here associate. Meruaile not at it, for the idolater forsaketh the truth and the worship of the true God, and worshippeth deuils. Last of all he nameth an other very bond kind of people, and that is, whosoever loueth and maketh lies. This extendeth very large, for there be that do make lies in Gods matters, vttering false doctrine, and those which doe loue the same. And there be that doe raise and vtter all manner of lies, vntruthes, and slaunders in mens matters. These are abominable. Let vs beware we bee not found among the number of such, for ye see there is no place for them within the holy citie: but they shall be without.



The 50. Sermon.

CHAP. 22.

- 16 I Iesus sent mine Angel to testifie vnto ye these things in the Churches: I am the roote and the generation of David, the bright morning starre.
- 17 And the spirit and the bride say come: and he that heareth let him say come. And he that is a thirst let him come. And hee that wil, let him take of the waters of life freely.
- 18 And I testifie vnto euery man that heareth the words of this prophetic: if any shall adde vnto these things, God will adde vnto him the plagues that are written in this booke.
- 19 And if any shall take away from the words of the prophetic of this booke, God will take away his part out of the booke of life, and out of the holy citie, and from the things which are written in this booke.
- 20 He that testifieth these things saith, surely I come quickly. Amen, euen so, come Lord Iesus.
- 21 The grace of our Lord Iesus Christ be with ye all, Amen.

The



E are now come to the last part of the conclusion of this booke, wherein there bee yet diuers pointes to handle. And first of all the authoritie of it is againe ratified from the person of him that is the author of it. For as yee see, the Lord Iesus himselfe affirmeth, saying, I Iesus sent mine Angell to testifie these things vnto yee in the Churches. Looke what dignitie and authoritie he is of from whom the booke cometh, and accordingly esteeme the dignitie and authoritie of the same.

And if ye will consider the dignitie of the Lord Iesus the king of glorie, marke what he sayth of himselfe in the words that follow: I am the roote and the generation of David, the bright morning starre. Here is the excellencie of Christ contained in these few words. The first part of them seemeth to bee drawne from the Prophet:

Prophet Esay. chap. 11. In the tenth chapter of that prophetic, there is a very great calamitie denounced against the people of Israel, vnder this similitude, that they should be cut downe euen like the trees of a wood. Then in the 11. chapter, for the comfort of the godly, least they might bee discomforted, there is added this promise; that a braunch shall spring out of the roote of Iesse, vpon whome the spirit of the Lord shall rest, the spirit of wisdom and vnderstanding, the spirit of counsell and power, the spirit of knowledge and of the feare of the Lord. And there it is shewed what great things hee shall doe: yea there is described the goodly restoration of all things by him. So that when he sayth, I am the roote and generation of Dauid, he leadeth vs to the consideration of all those great and excellent things, euen the things which are in the restoration made by him. All was cast downe, all was lost and fallen into vtter ruine, he as a most mightie redeemer restoreth them againe. In a worde then, whatsoeuer blessing God bestoweth vpon the world in his sonne, wee are led to the consideration of it in these words; I am the roote and the generation of Dauid. Moreouer, the Lorde Iesus (as hee saith in the Gospell of Iohn) is the light of the world: and therefore he saith here, I am the bright morning starre. But when as the holy Scripture calleth our Saviour Christ the sunne of righteousness, doth not this diminish of his glorie that he calleth himselfe the morning starre? For albeit the morning starre is bright and goodly, yet what is it to the Sunne? When the Sunne riseth, the light of that starre dooth giue place. To this I answer, that our Lord Iesus being called the bright morning starre, it doth not exclude the other, but he is also the Sunne. He is the morning starre, and he is the Sunne that ariseth with the full light. But seeing it is the purpose of the Lord to set forth the glorie of the riches and heavenly treasures which he bringeth vnto vs, why doth he rather choose the lesser then the greater? for the starre, as I sayd, is lesser then the Sunne. To this it may bee answered, that it is to shew that euen the very beginning of all light vnto vs is from Iesus Christ. We are couered vnder the night of spirituall darknes: he riseth vnto vs as the morning starre, very bright and comfortable, and proceedeth euen to be the full light of that cleere and blessed day that shall shine for euer, where there shall be no night. Then ye see that this Revelation cometh from a person of most high dignitie, excellencie and glorie, and full of all precious things: and so we ought to esteeme of it. For coming from him (as hee sayth, I Iesus sent mine Angell, &c.) wee must knowe that there be very good things in it, and such as doe neerely concerne vs. The Angell is but the seruant and messenger to testifie the things. Now vpon these words that our Lord sayth, he is the roote and the generation of Dauid, and the bright morning starre, the spirit and the bride say, come. This spirit is the holy Ghost. The bride ye know is the Lambes wife, euen the Church. She hearing of these excellent things in Christ the redeemer and restorer, is inflamed and euen rauished with the desire of his coming, that she may haue the full fruition of them: For all the excellencie of those precious things in Christ are for her. And least we should thinke that this her earnest desire proceeded but from some humane passion, when she

craveth

craveth of him to come, here is expressed that the spirit also with her sayth, come. Her request and earnest desire then of the coming of Christ is good. But here will arise a doubt, how this is to be vnderstood that the holy Ghost dooth pray for the coming of Christ? Wee know that he is God equall with the Father and the Sonne. How then can he be sayd to make this request? Can we say that God doth pray? Indeepe vpon this and such like places some haue wickedly held, that the holy Ghost is a creature, and not eternall God. But marke, I will shew you how it is to be taken. It is the same thing which S. Paul teacheth, Rom. 8. We know not (sayth he) how to pray as wee ought: but the spirit himselfe maketh request for vs with groanings, which cannot be expressed. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what the meaning is of the spirit: for he maketh intercession for the Saints according to God. Now beloued, looke how that place of Saint Paul is to be vnderstood, and so must we vnderstand this of S. Iohn. When he saith, that the spirit maketh request for vs with groanes: we may not take it that the holy Ghost is subiect vnto any griefe or passion: but hee worketh those groanings in the hearts of the faithfull. He maketh them, or hee teacheth them to pray with most vehement desires, euen with sighs and groanings that cannot be expressed: and therefore he is sayd to pray with groanings. Euen so it is the spirit that instructeth and teacheth, and inflameth the Church with the vehement desire of the coming of Christ: and therefore he sayth, the spirit and the bride say, come. As S. Paul sayth then that the spirit maketh request according to God: so wee are to take it here, when hee saith the spirit, and the bride say come, that the Church directed and taught by the holy Ghost, most vehemently longeth and prayeth for the coming of Christ, and that her prayer and desire herein is according to God. The bride verely could not pray thus but by the holy Ghost; she could not haue that desire of heavenly things, but euen with the children of this world set her affections here below: and therefore to note who directeth her to this heavenly motion, it is sayd, the spirit and the bride say come.

And let him that heareth say come. It is a thing indeede peculiar to the bride to loue the coming of Christ: in as much as she onely hath the spirit which worketh that desire. And now to teach how excellent a thing it is, Saint Iohn dooth wish euery one that heareth to say come. It is as much as if he should sitte vs vp to couet aboute all other things to be one of the children of the Church, to bee instructed and guided by that spirit which inflameth the heart, to crye come Lorde Iesus. Here is a speciall thing to be noted: and that is, that the Church and all her children doe waite for, and vehemently desire the coming of Christ vnto iudgement. If we feele no such desire in vs: is it not an argument against vs that we bee not let by that spirit? Either we are in loue with the things of this world, and could be content euen to be seated in them for euer, not thirsting after heavenly things: or els our conscience doth so accuse vs, that we are afraide when wee heare of his coming. What an excellent thing is it to bee led by such a spirit, that dooth so purge the heart and reforme the conscience, that the coming of the Lorde Iesus

vnto us, which shall be most terrible and dreadfull vnto others, vnto them is most ioyfull and longed for? Is not here a wonderfull difference betwene the faithfull & the children of this world? Let euery man therefore make this account, that if he doe not long for the comming of the Lord vnto iudgement, he is not right, all is not well with him. For if he bee a child of the Church endued with true faith, if he be led by the spirit of God, if he look for his part in those heauēly things: how can he but crie out in the feruent desire of his soule, Come Lord Iesus, come quickly. I pray you therefore, let euery one looke vnto their owne heart, and see what desire there is of this comming. If it be feeble and weake, seeke to be quickened with more abundance of the holy Ghost: seeke to haue the liuely hope of the partaking of those things which shall bee manifested and bestowed at his comming. There bee many things done here to the dishonor of God, and defacing of his trueth. We be here subiect vnto a thousand calamities. The things be wonderfull great which are layd vp in Christ to bee bestowed at his comming: shall wee not long for them? Then let him that heareth, say come. Doe ye heare that Iesus is the roote and generation of Dauid: euen he that shall make the glorious restauration? Doe ye heare that he is the bright morning starre, and that by him wee shall dwell in glorious light: and will ye not say come? Will ye not long for the time when these things shall be shewed forth?

Then he addeth: And he that is a thirst, let him come. Ye heard before that the promise is made to those that be a thirst. They be blessed that do thirst for the waters of life: for they shall come to the fountaine and drinke their fill. But such as be not a thirst, woe bee to them, they despise and set light by heauenly things, the fountaine shall be shut vp against them. They bee not worthie to be partakers of so precious things, which esteeme them so lightly. Woe bee to those then which care not for hearing the Gospell: if they had euer tasted how sweete the Lord is, they would runne after it: but alas they haue not tasted. They loue their owne wayes, and they shall be filled with their owne intentions. They thirst after gold, and siluer, after houses and lands. They delight in gay garments. They couet earthly delights and pleasures, euen to fill themselves from day to day: and these things they shall abound in. But what are they the better? for all these shall vanish and come to nought. He that is a thirst for the waters of life, he that earnestly desireth those heauenly blessings which are bestowed in Christ, shall bee happie and blessed with the Lord God in heauen for euer.

Then there is added further: And he that will, let him take of the waters of life freely. Here is a very large offer: that whosoever will, shall take of the waters of life. It may be sayd, who is it that would not be saued? Men indeede loue to walk in wicked wayes, and take pleasure in those sinnes which bring damnation both to the soule and to the bodie: but they doe not loue damnation, they could bee content to escape that, and willingly they would be saued: how then is it said here, let him that will, take of the waters of life freely. As I sayd, is not this a very large offer? is not here a very wide gate set open into heauen? Surely here is no more

then that he saith before, he wil giue to him that is a thirst of the waters of life freely, chapt. 21. for he that thirsteth hath a will: and he that thirsteth not, hath not a will. For this ye must knowe, that the will is not here put for euery light desire, or for euery wish that a man doth wish in his heart, when, as I said before, he walketh in the way of destruction, and committeth the thinges that deserue damnation, and yet would bee saued: But he is sayd to will, that loueth the way of the trueth, the way of godlines, the way that leadeth vnto saluation, and chooseth it and setteth himselfe in it. And how may this man be sayd to will and to choose? but euen when he imbraceth the holy doctrine of the Gospell, and by the same tasteth of the waters of life. They that will not loue, and delight in that pure doctrine, are sayd not to will. There is no way to drinke of the waters of life, but by drinking in that doctrine, which they will not. Then he that will, is he that imbraceth the pure word of the Lord, and filleth his soule therewith. True it is that men haue not this will of themselves: for man is wholly ouerspread in his minde with vanitie. There is a desire (as I sayd before) or a kind of will in man, by which hee coueteth to bee free from calamities and miseries, and to inioy good and happie things: but to haue a will to hate that which is vncleane and filthie, to loue that which is pure and good, and to delight in the doctrine of the Lord, is farre from nature, and indeede is giuen onely by God. Make an ende (sayth the holy Apostle) of your saluation with feare and trembling: for it is God that worketh in you both the will and the deede, euen of his good pleasure, Philip. 2. vers. 13. The spirit and the bride moueth her: how then can we haue any right will in vs, but that which the same spirit frameth? Indeeede it is a firme will in the wicked that they will not take of the waters of life. They are caried naturally and of their owne accord to will and to choose that euill day, and they doe euen willingly despise the holy things of the Lord. Mans heart is corrupt and vaine, it cannot change it selfe, it cannot denye it selfe, it is inclined to that which is like it selfe: it hateth the contrary. Wherefore where vaine things and corrupt doe offer themselves, it apprehendeth them, loveth them, willetth them, chuseth them, and delighteth in them. When holy things are propounded, they be disagreeing, it hateth them, it despiseth them, it reiecteth them, it will none of them, vntill such time as the holy spirit of the Lord do worke and frame that will by changing it. Whereby ye may know, that when he sayth, hee that will, let him take of the waters of life freely, the wicked refuse them of their owne corrupt will, and the godly doe choose them being taught by his spirit. He that willetth then, euen he that is a thirst for the waters of life, let him giue all the praise to God, who hath endued him with that grace, and let him know, that were it not for the grace of God, he should neuer haue had any will to come to those waters. And let such a man also daily begge of the Lord, that he may haue his will more and more reformed, euen to make choise of those things which indeede are most holy and precious.

And I testifie vnto euery man that heareth!

ny man shall adde vnto these things, God will adde vnto him the plagues that are written in this booke. And if any man shall take away from the words of the prophetic of this booke: God will take away his part &c. Here is an other ratification of the high and sacred authority of this booke: which is by a commination very sharp and terrible. It is for addinge or diminishinge. God doth commaund by Moses, that they should adde nothing to the words which hee did commaund them, neither take any thing from them. And great presumption it is for any man to take vpon him such a matter. What is it in deed but for one to take vpon him to be wiser then God? For ether there is somewhat wantinge which argueth an impefection, or else there is somewhat superfluous, why else should it be taken away? doubtles it can not be but with exceeding wicked pride of mans heart, and iniury to the authority of the most high God, when any take vpon them either to adde to, or to diminishe from his word. In this place therefore here is a fore threatening to such as shall any way presume, that is, either to adde or to diminishe: which commendeth the booke as perfect and absolute, and such as commeth with the high authority of God. For the adding, he doth threaten the adding of the plagues written in this booke: which are very great. For besides diuers and sundry other plagues, ye haue seene the plague of hell diuers times set forth, and after no wayes then one. It is the great wine presse of the wrath of God which we call hell. It is called the lake of fire & brimstone in which the diuell and all the wicked shalbe tormented for euer. He that addeth, shall haue this great plague added vnto him. Likewise ye haue seene a goodly description of the ioues of heauen; euen the glory and felicity of that holy city; ye haue heard also of the lambes booke of life: he that taketh away any thing from the words of the prophetic of this booke: hee shall haue the same written in that booke, nor any part in that holy city. So be deprived of life and glory, and not only that, but also to be cast into endles torments, might make men afraid how to be so bold with the word of the Lord. It may be demaunded what should be the cause that here are so many things heaped vp for the confirmation of the authority of this booke. Surely there is some special cause, for the holy ghost doth not vse to deale so much in a matter, and so earnestly, but vpon great cause. Ye may easily gather what the cause is. This booke as ye haue seene painteth out the kingdome of Antichrist & all Satans cunning and sleight: and for that cause Satan hath laboured especially to bring downe the authority and credit of this booke. He by some meanes in old time preuailed thus farre, that euen among some churches of true Christians, the authority and truth of it was doubred of. The holy ghost did foresee this practise of Satan, and addeth the more for the confirmation thereof: for it was needfull. If the booke should neuer in speciall sort be impugned, there needed not any such speciall confirmation. Now by the singular goodnes of God, there is no question, nor controuersie nor doubt concerning the authority of this booke. The papists themselues

it to bee the sacred and vndoubted word of God.

God. In deed of all scriptures they can not endure that it should bee medled withall. They say it is so darke that it can not be vnderstood. They hold that little in comparison can bee noted in it, which indeed is almost to deny the authority thereof. For to make it without vse, is to make the authority of it to no purpose. And what do they but make it without vse almost, if little can be noted in it? But blessed be God it is so cleere that as many as haue their eyes opened, both of learned and vnlearned, may see their kingdome described in it. Now let it here be considered whether wee or the papists may more rightly be charged to adde to the word of God. We hold strictly that the bookes of the Apostles and prophets, euen the bookes of the old and newe Testament which the churches since the Apostles times haue receiued for canonicall, are the perfect word of God, and none other. We hold that the Lord in these books hath deliuered his whole counsels and will, touching the faith and obedience which he requireth of man. We holde indeed that the worship of God is so perfectly set forth in those writings of the Apostles & prophets, that all matters of religion are to be ruled by that written word. We do maintaine that whatsoever is added as a matter of religion, the same is wicked and abominable. We holde that all they which dare take vpon them to dispense with any part of the holy word, are cursed. We holde indeed that the word of God written is absolutely perfect, and all controuersies to be decided by it. Our aduersaries take vpon them to maintaine that besides the written word, there be also vnwritten verities, which are kept by tradition. They adde to the holy scriptures sundry bookes which they take vpon them to make canonicall: which bookes were neuer written by any prophets or Apostles. They say that the holy scriptures are doubtfull and vn certaine, or not sufficient to decide & to determine all controuersies in religion. They maintaine that the authority of the holy scripture in respect of men dependeth vpon their church. They hold the decretall epistles of their popes, and canons of general councils in some equality with the written word of God: in as much as they maintain them to be free from all error. In all these things, do they not ad nor take away? I suppose there is no man of vnderstanding which will not confesse that they do both adde and diminish. What an impudency is it then in them, vpon this place to charge vs? We being so cleere, and standing so firme for the whole scriptures, and for nothinge but scripture, and they themselues so guilty many waies. Let them alone, the threatening here vttered against such as adde or diminish, must needs come vpon them. Touching the cauil of those of the family of loue, it is not worth the answering. Some of them saye that such as expound doe adde to the holy scriptures: but interpretation, and the true application of the worde GOD, is no addinge. Then Saint Iohn addeth, he that testifieth these things faith, beholde I come quickly. This is to stirre vp the mindes of the faithfull to watch for his coming. For we are dull and thinke the coming of the Lorde farre off. The reason is that wee can not rightly measure time. For if wee

could see, it should appeare that a thousand years is euen almost as nothinge : For what is it to eternitie, which after many thousand thousand yeares, commeth not any neerer to an end : For where there is no end, the end commeth not neere. Men thinke the time of their liue here a long time, & very madly for a few pleasures of sin cast away themselves for euer. We should remember that the end of the world is euen come vpon vs, and that the Lord will come quickly, and so prepare our selues for his comminge. The Lord saith hee will come quickly, and S. Iohn crieth out with great zeale, Amen, euen so, come Lord Iesus. This desire of his comming ought we all to haue, if we bee led by that same spirit that S. Iohn was. Then he concludeth this holy booke with the last part of the conclusion, that is by wishing all spirituall blessings vpon them, which he expresseth in these words: The grace of our Lord Iesus Christ be with yee all, Amen. The Lorde bring his prayer vpon vs.

FINIS.

